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Is Manston the hottest of all political potatoes?

SPEAK to anyone who lives outside of east Kent, and the trials and tribulations of Manston Airport mean little. In fact, even the word Manston will cause plenty of people to scratch their heads and wonder what or, indeed, where it actually is.

Yet for the good folk of Thanet, the currently closed airport has become the isle's number one cause. It has assumed a significance which nothing in its modern day history, its critics will say, has warranted.

And, in truth, it is hard to sometimes argue a coherent case for its revival given years of failed ventures and a constant haemorrhaging of money.

But for those in Thanet, it is so powerful a sign of what could be, Ukip – which vowed to re-open it following its closure in May 2014 – swept to power at the local elections in May.

The only problem now, like so many politicians in the past who made such loud election guarantees, is that with power comes great responsibility and the realisation that, when in opposition, the ability to force through change seems so much easier than when the reins are placed in your hands.

The result is an implosion within its ranks and a fall-out which is becoming one of the most fascinating political studies in the county. Lessons, it is far to say, will be learned.

Inside, we take a close-up look at the problems and how Manston has become something of a poisoned political chalice.

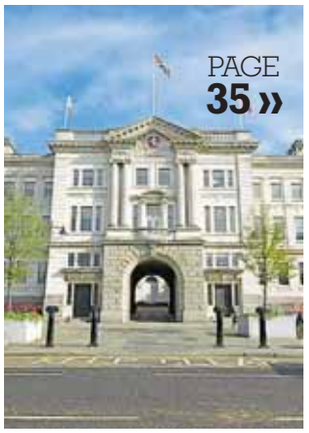
Of course, if Manston does re-open, the expectation of it delivering sufficient jobs and economic benefits to the surrounding area to justify the relentless campaigning will be so high, it is becoming increasingly difficult to see how that will be met. The saga, it is fair to say, continues.



Editor **Chris Britcher**

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PCC approves £1.8m deal for cops to wear cameras

By Jamie Weir
jamie.weir@archant.co.uk



CAUGHT: Smile - you're about to be recorded on police camera after pilot scheme proves a success

EVERY police officer on the streets of Kent is to be equipped with a state-of-the-art camera after a £1.8 million investment in the wearable technology was approved this week.

Police and crime commissioner Ann Barnes gave the nod to the roll-out following a pilot scheme proved a success.

The force began testing the cameras in three parts of the county in late 2014, with 400 going on trial.

The cameras give officers the opportunity to record all of their dealings with suspects while on patrol.

According to the PCC, suspects would alter their behaviour when they were aware they were being filmed.

Those being quizzed will be informed the camera is on.

Mrs Barnes announced the plans to the Kent and Medway police and crime panel which scrutinises her office and decisions.

She said: "The Police Federation is very happy with this because it stops malicious complaints against officers and it stops officers being hurt.

"Body worn video cameras have a number of benefits for the people of Kent, for Kent Police officers and for the broader criminal justice system.

"These include improved evidence gathering, a reduction in bureaucracy and an increase in guilty pleas from offenders."

An initial cost of £1.4m will be channelled into the set-up costs of buying the cameras with another £400,000 put aside for three years of ongoing costs.

Mrs Barnes said the cameras would, in effect, pay for themselves after just two years.

She said: "Complaints against officers take an awful lot of time to investigate.

"By recording conversations and reducing the number of complaints against officers, the force estimates savings in time taken to look into those complaints will save around £900,000 a year.

"They expect there will be 2,600 less absences caused by police officers being hurt on duty. This has led to my office supporting the chief constable's measured roll-out."

The National College of Policing said that swifter justice may be achieved in certain cases while using the cameras.

Violence on the rise at Cookham Wood after latest inspectors' report

A YOUNG offenders' institute continues to have a catalogue of serious problems, according to the latest prison report, with a "very high" level of violent incidents and the number of assaults on staff doubling over the last six months.

In the six months leading up to March 2015, there had been 61 assaults and 92 fights – some of which inspectors describe as "very serious", at HM Young Offenders Institute (YOI) Cookham Wood in Rochester.

It holds around 166 boys, mostly aged 16 or 17 – 10 per cent of whom have been convicted or charged with murder or manslaughter.

Although some improvements had been made, overall concerns had grown, said Nick Hardwick, chief inspector of prisons.

Among them were 41 per cent of boys at the institute saying they felt "unsafe". In addition, they were given too little time out of their cells, leaving some too frightened to mix with others.

Nick Hardwick said: "Cookham Wood reflects the systemic problems we have identified across the YOI estate. This report makes recommendations about what Cookham Wood could and should do to improve, but a much wider political and policy response is needed if we are to fulfil our responsibilities to care for these, our most damaged children, safely and help them to grow into adults who are valued, not feared."

Michael Spurr, chief executive of the National Offender Management Service, said: "Since the inspection, staff numbers have increased; a new education contract has been introduced; staff have been trained in new restraint techniques and safeguarding measures have been strengthened, all of which have had a positive impact on safety and behaviour.

"Tackling violence and providing a safe environment remains the governor's biggest challenge and top priority and work will continue to improve standards even further."

19th-century boat store put on the 'most at risk' register

A GRADE I listed boat store has been named as one of the nation's most at-risk buildings.

The Sheerness Boat Store was named by the Victorian Society on its annual list of historically significant buildings in desperate need of help "if they are not to be lost in the immediate future".

The store, built around the mid 19th century, is the world's earliest surviving example of a particular kind of iron framed structure – a technique near universally used in modern steel framed buildings today.

Director of the Victorian Society, Christopher Costelloe, said: "The Grade I listed boat store at Sheerness has worldwide importance. All on the list are in desperate need of investment."

Work on extending railway station platforms under way

A PROJECT to extend 12 station platforms along the Kent and East Sussex border formally began on Friday.

The platforms stretch between Edenbridge Town and Uckfield. It is hoped the move will help ease crowding on the line, and increase capacity during the morning peak by 50 per cent. The work is expected to be completed by the spring of next year.

Tonbridge and Malling MP Tom Tugendhat will mark the occasion by visiting Hever station.

He said: "This will mean commuters and other rail users will be able to have a more comfortable journey as trains are able to take extra carriages. Work is now under way and this will be a huge benefit to the local community."

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seven days

Stories which made the headlines **@kentnews.co.uk** during the past week

Teenager found dead by Channel Tunnel tracks

A TEENAGE migrant has been killed trying to cross the Channel Tunnel into Kent.

The migrant, a boy believed to have been aged between 15 and 17 and from Eritrea or Sudan in east Africa, was killed by a freight train.

He is believed to be the 12th person killed in or around the Channel Tunnel entrance in Calais since the refugee crisis erupted earlier this year.

A spokesman for the Pas de Calais Prefecture, the local administration, said: ''At around 2am on Wednesday a freight shuttle struck a migrant who was crossing the tracks on the site of the Channel Tunnel.

''When emergency services arrived they found the migrant dead. An investigation is under way.''

MP adds voice to chorus of concerns over cancer vaccine for teenage girls

By Emma Youle
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AN MP has raised concerns about the safety of a vaccine given to schoolgirls to prevent cervical cancer – saying there has been a reluctance in the medical profession to acknowledge possible side effects.

Conservative MP for Thanet North, Sir Roger Gale, has spoken out to highlight the fears of "a small but significant number" of parents whose daughters have suffered debilitating health problems following the HPV vaccine (see KoS last week).

The jab is given to girls aged 12 and 13 and the latest round of inoculations is due to take place in Kent schools this month.

He said: "I'm not anti-vaccine. The disease for which the vaccine is applied is very serious indeed, and if that is preventable any parent or grandparent would want to prevent it.

"But we have to proceed further with great caution because we know that there is a small but significant number of cases where things have gone wrong, where there has been an adverse reaction."



PROBE: Into illness after HPV jab

The vaccine provides protection from the two main strains of the human papilloma virus (HPV) that cause 70 per cent of cervical cancers.

Government health agencies insist there have been no safety signals for the vaccine, which has a 90 per cent uptake rate.

A spokesman for the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), which monitors vaccine programmes, said: "The overwhelming majority of the suspected side effects reported so far relate to those we would expect with most types of vaccine, and the expected benefits of the HPV vaccine far outweigh any known risks."

Yet a small number of girls have suffered life-changing illnesses following the vaccine. Symptoms include extreme dizziness and chronic fatigue.

The European Medicines Agency launched a review last month to investigate reports of two very rare health conditions following the vaccination. Mr Gale said: "I think there is a reluctance on the part of the medical profession to acknowledge that there is any possible side effect of the vaccine that could have led to the conditions that have occurred."



POPULAR: Council pulled scheme

Plans for big wheel at ice rink scrapped

PLANS to put a Ferris wheel and dodgems next to the popular ice skating rink in Tunbridge Wells this Christmas, have been withdrawn by council chiefs.

It follows a backlash from neighbours of the rink, in the picturesque Calverley Grounds, and community groups.

The ice rink is a popular attraction and is used to pull in the crowds to the town centre to help local retailers during the busy festive season and swell the local economy.

But when the council said it was planning to add attractions to the site – including bumper cars and a big wheel – it sparked controversy. Now Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, which is behind the attraction, has confirmed the plans have been ditched.

The council's cabinet member with responsibility for tourism and leisure, Jane March said: "I know that the team behind the ice rink will be disappointed but I feel that on this occasion we should be listening to residents, therefore, I have asked for the planning application to be formally withdrawn.

"The ice rink is a delightful feature of the Christmas scene in Tunbridge Wells and the idea of the enhanced offering was to appeal to younger people and those who want to visit the rink but don't want to skate."

Air show confirms it will be back in 2017

ORGANISERS of the Herne Bay Air Show have confirmed it will be back – but not until 2017.

The BayPromoTeam, which staged the historic Amy Johnson Memorial Air Show last month, have confirmed they are working on another event which they vow will be bigger and better than before.

But with estimates suggesting it could cost £100,000 to stage, Gerald McCarthy from the BayPromoTeam said it needed more time to organise it.

He said: ''Staging something along the lines of what the town witnessed last month takes lots of time and costs tens of thousands of pounds. We believe that to bring what we have in mind for the next air show will take more time – both in terms of further planning and to raise the funds.

''The work starts now to put something like this together. We'll need businesses and the wider community to help us fund this mammoth event, and help Herne Bay establish itself as one of the UK's top air shows and showcase our wonderful town.''

Warning over 'spoof' KCC telephone scam

TRADING standards chiefs at Kent County Council are warning of a new telephone scam which 'spoofs' a once legitimate number used by the council to help dupe callers.

They say they have received a number of reports of calls claiming to be from the local authority asking callers if they have contacted the NHS about a recent accident they, or a family member, has had.

A spokesman explains: ''The telephone number used to make these calls is 03000 414000, which was a telephone number for Kent County Council.

''Please be aware that the calls are not being made by Kent County Council, this number is being replicated by caller ID spoofing equipment as part of a scam or hoax and is no longer in use.

''We are concerned that residents may be asked for payment or information such as bank details.''

If you receive one of these scam telephone calls please report it to Kent County Council Trading Standards or telephone the Citizens Advice consumer service on 03454 04 05 06.

Major breakthrough in bid to save rare tree

EXPERTS have succeeded in germinating seeds from one of the world's most critically endangered tree species for the first time in 30 years – fuelling hopes it could save it from extinction.

Staff made the breakthrough, on the threatened Japanese birch, at the Forestry Commission's National Pinetum at Bedgebury, near Goudhurst.

It is so rare that only 21 trees were recorded growing in the wild in 1993, and it is listed as critically endangered by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The seeds were collected on a visit to Japan.

The seedlings will be grown at Bedgebury and added to the collection – others will be shared with Oxford University.

Dan Luscombe, dendrologist at Bedgebury, said: ''I consider myself very fortunate to have seen such critically endangered species in the wild. However, to be part of the team that can make such a significant contribution to securing the survival of a species in the wild is really exciting and rewarding.''

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Your chance to call for lights to be switched back on again

By Chris Britcher
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A 10-week consultation began this week into whether street lights should be switched back on throughout the night.

It comes as the latest stage in the often controversial saga which began when Kent County Council announced it was switching some street lighting off during the middle of the night in a bid to save money. It said it hoped to save some £1m a year in energy costs.

But many residents complained it made some streets feel unsafe and petitions were started in a bid to demand a change.

The A Right to Light petition was started by Gravesham resident Tina Brooker. She started the e-petition after people tried to break into her disabled neighbour's house after the lights there were turned off.

She explained: "There are so many night workers – care workers, taxi drivers, hospital workers. Even if crime is not rising on their streets, their fear of crime is and people are feeling vulnerable."

Although it transpired Kent Police had objected to the initial proposal, it appears that the switch off has not contributed to any increase in crime figures.

Now though communities have their chance to give their views on whether they would prefer part or all-night lighting.



GLARE: Street lighting is under the spotlight as major consultation period begins

It comes after KCC secured funding to convert the county's 118,000 street lights to LEDs (light emitting diodes) – ultimately delivering annual savings of up to £5.2m.

Matthew Balfour, Kent County Council cabinet member for environment and transport, said: "We are aware that some people have concerns about part-night lighting, in particular that it may lead to an increase in crime or the fear of crime.

"We have been working very closely with Kent Police, who have analysed their records and stated that they have found no correlation between crime rates and changes to street lighting.

"However, with the flexibility offered by the new technology we have an opportunity to review the way that we provide street lighting. We want to understand how residents would prefer their street lights to operate."

To take part, visit www.kent.gov.uk/streetlights. Deadline is November 29.

Friends and family mourn council leader

TRIBUTES have been paid to a former leader of Dover District Council who has lost his battle with cancer.

Tony Sansum created history by becoming the first Labour leader of the local authority in the 1990s and was in charge for four years.

The father-of-one was 63.

His funeral takes place on Tuesday at Barham crematorium at 4pm.

Medway unveils new regeneration chief

RICHARD Hicks has been appointed Medway Council's new director of regeneration, community and culture.

Formerly deputy director, he will now spearhead some of the council's largest upcoming projects which include Rochester Riverside and Chatham Waterfront.

Rain causes chaos

HEAVY rain on Tuesday saw a number of roads in the east of the county flooded as the heavens opened for both the morning and evening rush hours.

Parts of Dover, Deal, Ashford, Canterbury and Whitstable found themselves submerged as torrential rains swept in causing surface flooding and blocking a number of roads.

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LENLEYS

MPs pile on pressure to put power cables underground

TWO MPs have repeated their demands for National Grid's new Richborough Connection, to be put underground.

The link could see a string of pylons running from Richborough near Sandwich, to the east of Canterbury where the power will be plugged into the National Grid.

The plans prompted criticism over fears the pylons will have a devastating impact on the surrounding countryside.

Now Canterbury MP Julian Brazier, alongside his Thanet North colleague Sir Roger Gale, have called on the energy minister, Amber Rudd, to ensure the new connection – which will pipe in power from Belgium – is as hidden away as possible; preferably by burying the cable underground.



Mr Brazier: "The pylons are 46 metres tall and will blight one of Britain's most famous skylines. Plus the placement could prevent plans for a Broad Oak reservoir."

A spokesman for National Grid said: "We considered placing the cables underground but feel that a carefully designed and routed overhead line achieves the right balance."

Outlet centre to double in size and create 700 jobs

PLANS for a major expansion of popular Ashford Designer Outlet, doubling its size, have been given the seal of approval by the local council.

The planning committee on Ashford Borough Council unanimously approved the ambitious scheme which will see a 100,000sq ft extension, bringing with it 40 new stories, six restaurants and cafes and the creation of 700 new jobs.

It is planned to open in 2018, and it is the first expansion since the centre opened in 2000.

The existing outlet comprises 90 stores and currently attracts nearly three million visitors a year – and there are hopes that the expansion will attract several million more.

Leader of the council, Conservative Gerry Clarkson, said: "The news symbolises Ashford's growing reputation as a town attracting inward investment and high-calibre, quality brands.

"At the same time we are working hard to make sure that our town centre prospers.

"The construction of Ashford College, which is now under way, and the recent planning application for the new cinema, restaurants and hotel at Elwick Place are good indications of the progress we are making as part of a wider set of plans to see a renaissance of our town centre, which will benefit the whole borough."

Gary Bond, McArthurGlen's managing director of development, added: "We are hugely excited about the opportunities this will bring to the town."

Get your dog chipped

PET owners can get their dogs micro-chipped for free at a Sheerness supermarket next month.

Kent Police, the Dogs Trust and Swale Borough Council have teamed up to offer the service on October 10 between 10am and 2pm at Tesco in Bridge Road.

Train tragedy inquest

AN INQUEST into the death of Canterbury grammar school student Sacha Wheeler, 14, has recorded a verdict of accidental death.

The teenager, from the Simon Langton Girls' School, was thought to be listening to music when she was hit by a train as she crossed the railway line at Glebe Way in Whitstable.

GP 'caught' on Hunted

VIEWERS saw Canterbury GP Dr Ricky Allen's life 'on the run' came to an end on Channel 4 TV show Hunted this week.

He had become the star of the show, which sees members of the public attempt to evade professional pursuers. He had fled to the Scottish Highlands but was caught in London.

University security scare

TEMPLEMAN Library at the University of Kent had to be evacuated on Wednesday after an anonymous phone call sparked a security alert.

Police were called at around 10.40am after staff alerted them. It was fully re-opened by 3pm.



Bridge Haven Care Home

avante care & support 'Everyone Matters'

Bridge Haven care home provides care with compassion for those living with dementia. The home offers care and comfort, but also introduces a new, positive and more engaging stage in the lives of its residents who live there.

The team of attentive, experienced and skilled staff provide 24 hour care in a pleasant, homely environment. Services provided at Bridge Haven include full time residential care, day care and short term respite care known as the homes 'My Time'service.

All rooms at Bridge Haven are bright and cheerful with many bedrooms having en-suite facilities providing relaxation and a sense of well-being.

Other facilities include the 'Snug' – a pub like facility for residents to enjoy and socialise and Gregory's tea room, situated in one of the two attractively laid gardens.

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Top Three Stories



1. University is evacuated

Security alert at the University of Kent

2. Death at the tunnel

Teenager found dead at Channel Tunnel

3. Centre gets expansion

Designer outlet will double in size

The Essential Guide:



...to fracking in Kent

See: http://bit.ly/19P9F6f



FEATURED PHOTO GALLERY: Fleetwood Mac star puts Kent mansion on the market for £3.5m as she looks to move to London. For more images inside the property, turn to page 31 of this edition of Kent on Sunday.

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Top Three Blogs



1. Trouble with binmen

The perils of being a bit of a jobsworth

2. Rude drivers on our roads

And why they make us irrationally cross

3. Celebrate breastfeeding

Nursing mums need our support

Results of the *KoS* Online Poll

Should rugby be played in more of Kent's schools?

1. Yes - it toughens kids up 50%
2. Yes - but only touch rugby 0%
3. No - it's dangerous 33%
4. Undecided 17%

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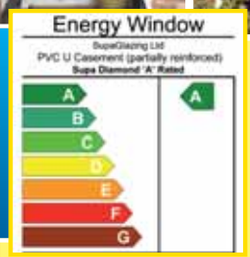
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AA hits out at £700m plans

Some we already knew about, others confirmation of long-discussed schemes. But as major investment in our roads was unveiled, one major motoring organisation was unimpressed. **Tom Pyman** reports

MOTORING organisation the AA has slammed the government's £700 million investment into roads in Kent, unveiled this week, insisting the money is being pumped into the wrong areas.

It was announced on Thursday that a series of works on the M2, M20, A2, A21 and preparation work on the still-to-be-confirmed Lower Thames Crossing will take place over the next five years – some are already under way.

The plans are part of a wider £2.2 billion government investment into infrastructure across the south east.

Announcing the details this week, Simon Jones, south east regional director at Highways England, the agency responsible for all of the country's motorways and major A roads, said: "This investment includes nearly 150 miles of extra lanes, new junctions, and measures to tackle congestion, benefitting businesses, local residents and road users as well as delivering a four-fold return on investment for the UK economy.

"It's vital that we continue to improve the existing road network as well, which is why we're investing over £200 million this year alone in resurfacing, improving technology and safety measures and other maintenance projects.

"The region's motorways and dual carriageways are vital for our economy and this huge investment will ensure they remain fit for purpose for many years to come."

Ken Simmonds, Highways England's major projects director for the south, added: "These schemes will bring significant long-term benefits to road users on motorways and major A roads in the south east, as well as to local residents and the economy as a whole.

"The construction work will, of course, bring some disruption in the short term but we will ensure that we keep this to a minimum to keep traffic flowing.

"When the schemes are completed, road users will experience safer, more reliable and less congested journeys."

But Paul Watters, a spokesman for the AA, told KoS: "I'm concerned that the A2 going into Dover is still just a single carriageway, that would have been a key thing to identify.

"I think it was feasible to upgrade that particular stretch of road. Kent is the gateway to Europe and it's absolutely imperative we have smooth connections in that area."

The A2 has been under particularly stress this summer due to Operation Stack.

There was no sign of plans to expand the stretch between Whitfield and Lydden, nor the busy Jubilee Way road that leads towards the port.

Some £250m has been earmarked for 'developing plans' for the Lower Thames Crossing – despite no decision yet being made as to where it will be sited. The choice is at Dartford or east of Gravesend.

Mr Simmonds said: "There's not a lot to say on that because it's very early days at the moment, but we're working hard to find a solution that will work."

The much-discussed plans for junction 10A on the M20 at Ashford, however, are finally on track following lengthy delays after the proposals were first announced in the 2010 spending review.

The new junction will be introduced to the south-east of the existing junction 10 and will include a roundabout over the motorway, new sliproads and a link to the A2070, with construction beginning in the next couple of years.

It is designed to open up a part of the town where there is extensive development work planned.

Mr Jones said: "There were delays because of the number of options to be considered and we needed time to get to the right operational solution. It's taken longer than we thought but that's because we were determined to find the right solution. This is a project that will cost in excess of £50m and we'll be getting on the ground there in 2017/18.

"We are looking to accelerate this but it depends on how long it takes to procure the contractors and it's important we don't rush the process because we want to do it safely and in the right way. We plan to open in 2018/19 but it will likely be closer to 2019, so this is most likely a two year process.

"This is an important development because we want to provide better access to the hospital and planned residential areas nearby. Junction 10 is a difficult junction and this will provide a number of significant benefits."

One particularly pleasing project for highways chiefs was the progression of the dualling of the carriageway on the A21, which began earlier this year, to help tackle congestion between Tonbridge and Pembury.

Mr Simmonds said: "We're well on schedule with that and anticipate it will be completed in 2016/17 which is fantastic because it's a substantial and difficult job.

"The cost will be nearer to £50m [initial forecasts predicted the cost to be around £70m] which is also pleasing in terms of economic efficiency."

There will also be up to £100m invested in making improvements to junctions on the A2 near Bean and Ebbsfleet, with bosses keen to improve links ahead of the proposed plans for the £2bn London Paramount Resort on the Swanscombe Peninsula.

Mr Jones said: "We're improving the junctions in preparation for the Paramount park which is an exciting venture that will provide 20,000 jobs. We will need to have good links to the park so this is about enabling these developments to occur. We're very keen to get that on the ground and make that available from 2019/20.

"Work on that probably won't be completed until 2022/23. The reason it is a lengthy process would be simply to do with the volume and intensity of the work, so we need to go through some of the operational concepts."

The park is due to open in the Easter of 2020.

Other works that will affect the county include the introduction of a third lane on the M2 to reduce congestion at junction five near Sittingbourne, and turning the M20 near Maidstone into a smart motorway, meaning Highways England can control speeds to improve traffic flow, provide driver information on overhead signs, as well as opening up the hard shoulder as an extra lane at times of peak demand. Trial periods of the technology have already taken place.

However, the AA's Mr Watters also warned about the potential dangers of implementing such a scheme: "While smart motorways certainly have their benefits, I've got reservations about the opening of the hard shoulder.

"If someone breaks down on lane one, that could cause all sorts of problems, when it wouldn't be too much of an issue otherwise. I understand opening up the hard shoulder can save congestion but it also carries with it a huge amount of risk."

■ **What do you think of the schemes? Share your views and join the debate. Write to: The Editor, KoS, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford, TN23 1PP. Or email editorial@kosmedia.co.uk.**



M20: Part of the route is to be turned into a smart motorway

Victim's mum slams Noye move

The parole board say the M25 road rage killer Kenneth Noye should not be released from jail – but has recommended he be moved to an open prison, which could pave the way to his release in a few years

By Kate Ferguson
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

THE mother of Kenneth Noye's road rage victim has said she fears for her own safety if the killer is moved to an open prison.

Notorious gangster Noye could be back on Britain's streets in months after the ruling this week by the parole board (see box).

The 68 year-old is serving a life sentence for stabbing to death electrician Stephen Cameron, 21, in a road rage attack on the slip road of the M25 at Swanley in 1996 – a killing which became one of the most notorious in the county's history.

Mr Cameron's mother Toni said she and her husband Ken are "devastated" at the decision, which if approved would mean Noye moves to a prison where he could be given home leave, trips out and even get a job.

She said: "We are devastated. He should stay in prison, he has murdered somebody. Where's the justice?

"I wouldn't feel safe. I don't trust him. I wouldn't trust him one iota. A leopard doesn't change his spots.

"He left our son dying in the road and absconded to Spain the next day like he didn't have a care in the world. He didn't care about anybody apart from himself."

Mrs Cameron, who lived in Dartford at the time of the attack but now lives in Lowestoft in Suffolk, said she is appalled that her son has been robbed of his life while his killer could be free to walk the streets again.

She said: "Our son hasn't got a life, we have lost our lives – our family has all been devastated.

"We have been denied grandchildren, a marriage. We had two foster grandchildren who were with us that day and they've never got over it."

Two years before killing Stephen Cameron, Noye had been released from prison for handling bullion stolen in the Brink's-Mat robbery.

He stabbed to death police officer John Fordham in January 1985 in the grounds of his home in West Kingsdown, but was acquitted at trial after claiming he was acting in self-defence.

After killing Mr Cameron he went on the run and was arrested in Spain two years later in 1998.

In 2000 he was jailed for life with a minimum tariff of 16 years.

Mrs Cameron said "life should mean life" and urged ministers to block the parole board's recommendation.

She said: "Why do they think all of a sudden that he is Mr Goody Two-Shoes? So he is going to change all of a sudden?

"He will be the model prisoner, he's got a life of luxury in there.

"I think this country's justice system isn't good enough.

"If he is in an open prison he could abscond again - like he did when he murdered our son. He went to Spain for two years, showed no remorse and left Stephen lying in the gutter dying.

"We have been fighting in Stephen's corner for justice, but this is not justice. He was given a life sentence with a 16-year tariff, but to me life should mean life, end of. Why should he come out and enjoy the rest of his life?"

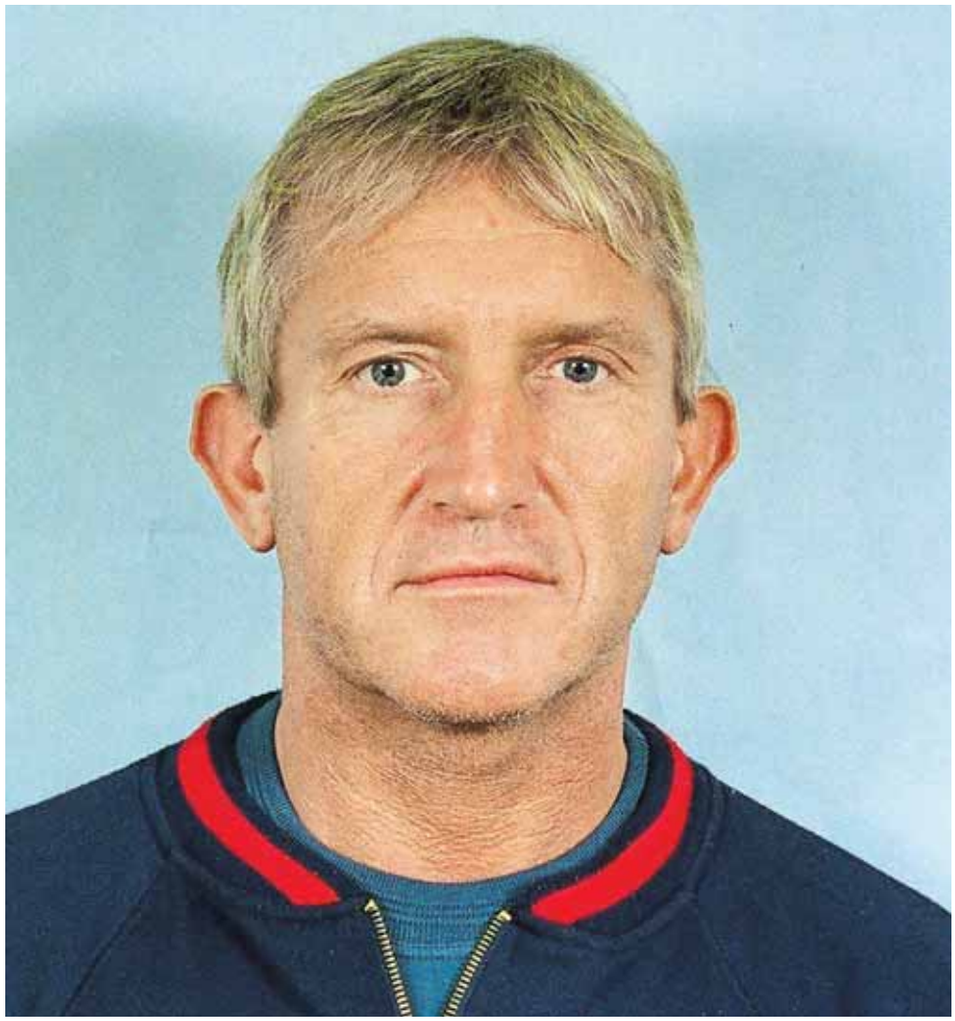
The family is planning to write to justice secretary Michael Gove to urge him to block the move to an open prison.

Last week, the now retired police detective who tracked down Noye to Spain when he was on the run, Nick Biddiss, told KoS he believed Noye was one of those criminals who should spend the rest of his life behind bars.

The former police chief said: "My own personal view is that some people should never come out and he is perhaps one of them. I feel the Cameron family will go through the whole trauma again, and that is a problem."

Danielle Cable, Mr Cameron's girlfriend at the time of the killing, witnessed the stabbing and then bravely testified in court against Noye.

Following the case, she was put under a witness protection programme.





DECISION: Kenneth Noye, above, has already spent 15 years behind bars for stabbing to death Stephen Cameron, 21, right, on a slip road of the M25 at Swanley in 1996. The Ministry of Justice says it will rule on moving him within a month.

MINISTRY OF JUSTICE PONDERS RECOMMENDATION

EARLIER this month, Kenneth Noye stood before a parole board committee.

Flanked by experts who had monitored his progress while serving the last 15 years behind bars, the board faced a simple question – was Noye sufficiently reformed and rehabilitated to be released from jail and pose no threat to the public?

After spending some weeks pondering their decision, the parole board announced its findings on Monday.

Noye was not ready for release, it said, but that it recommended he be transferred to an open prison. It is a move which normally paves the way for eventual release. An open prison is used for those who have spent long sentences in conventional jails and are being prepared for a return to normal life.

The board's recommendations must now go to the Ministry of Justice, which will make its own decision. That, it confirmed this week, is likely to come within 28 days.

A parole board spokesman said: ''We can confirm a panel of the board has not directed the release of Kenneth Noye but has recommended to the Ministry of Justice that he is suitable for a move to open conditions. It is up to the Ministry of Justice whether or not to accept this recommendation.''

She added: ''In considering a recommendation for open conditions, the parole board is required to make a balanced assessment of the risks and benefits of such a move, the emphasis should be on risk to the public.

''A prisoner can be returned to closed conditions at any time if there are adverse developments that make it no longer safe for the prisoner to be held in open conditions.''

A Ministry of Justice spokesman said: ''The independent parole board has made their recommendation. We seek to respond to parole board recommendations within 28 days.''

At the time of going to press, it was understood no decisions have been made yet.

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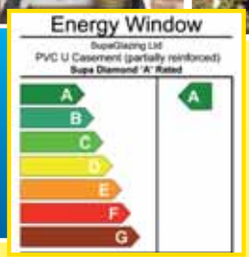


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Ukip legacy could prove undoing of Ukip council

When Ukip won control of Thanet council in May, it vowed to re-open Manston Airport as a priority. More than 100 days in, it remains shut and four Ukip councillors have defected over the issue. Now, it is claimed, more are to come...

By Jamie Weir
jamie.weir@archant.co.uk

A COUNCILLOR who defected from Thanet District Council says he would be "surprised" if the party still held power by Christmas after weeks of bitter infighting have left the ruling group in disarray.

Thanet is the only local authority in the country under Ukip control, with the party having been voted in at the local elections in May.

But now the pressure is growing on council leader Chris Wells after four of his councillors quit the party in recent weeks and, says one of them, more are considering their options.

Cllr Wells strongly denies claims others will follow suit.

At the heart of the problem is the key issue on which the party seized power from the traditional see-saw of Conservative and Labour control – Manston Airport.

Ukip vowed to get the airport, which closed in May 2014, re-opened if it won the election.

But it is now under pressure to deliver.

Ironically, Cllr Wells had pledged at the beginning of his term to run the 'most boring council' to demonstrate how Ukip was a safe pair of hands.

Instead, it faces implosion.

The argument spilled over when four Ukip councillors resigned from the party, choosing to sit as independents.

Other critics say Cllr Wells has fulfilled his ambition of being 'boring', but only by doing so little during his first five months in power.

Former Ukip councillor Konnor Collins, who defected earlier this month, told KoS: "I'd be surprised if Ukip hold the balance of power at Christmas. It would be my prediction that the party will see other defections soon, and I know that when I went, other Ukip councillors not only congratulated me on being brave, but were also telling me they were thinking about leaving the party, either for the Tories, Labour or to stand as independents."

He added: "The promises we made just aren't being kept. We pledged that Manston would go ahead, and now they're saying that they'll 'do their best' to get it to go ahead.

"Cllr Wells is backtracking now, and I've heard some Ukip councillors saying that they'll have three years to get over it if Manston doesn't happen. I don't think that's the attitude to take, and I don't think the people of Thanet will let them get away with it. There are also a lot of Ukip councillors who are genuinely frustrated that they can't move forward, and I think that'll start to show soon."

Manston Airport has proved to be the epitome of the political hot potato.

After being sold into private hands in 1989, the former Ministry of Defence airfield has struggled to keep in the black, with a trail of doomed ventures taking off – and then metaphorically crashing – ever since.

But it has long been touted as an essential cog in the economic revival of east Kent and many remain convinced it can still flourish.

When it shut in 2014, some 140 jobs were lost. It came just six months after businesswoman Ann Gloag – co-founder of the Stagecoach bus empire – has snapped up the site, along with its debts, for £1.

But after hoped for deals with Ryanair for a budget route to operate and a freight deal with British Airways fell through, she closed it, claiming it was losing £10,000 a day.

She then sold a majority stake in the land to Trevor Cartner and Chris Musgrave, who are also developers of Discovery Park, formerly the Pfizer site, in Sandwich.

In turn, earlier this year they unveiled Stone Hill Park – an ambitious scheme to change the site into a blend of residential, commercial and industrial developments.

It was a move which incensed campaigners fighting for Manston to re-open.

Many had been pinning their hopes on a US investment company called RiverOak, which had vowed to turn the airport into a thriving air freight terminal. Its offers to buy the site had been previously rejected by Ms Gloag.

Campaigners want the local authority to use the power of the Compulsory Purchase Order – allowing councils to purchase land for the greater good – to buy the land and then hand the site to RiverOak. But critics say the move puts taxpayers' money, despite reassurances costs would be met, at risk.

The council's former Labour administration received an independent report that warned against the move.

But Ukip insisted they would change things.

But around 120 days into Ukip's office, campaigners, including Cllr Collins and the other Ukip defectors, are getting impatient.

South Thanet MP Craig Mackinlay, the Tory who beat Ukip leader Nigel Farage in the race to Westminster, told KoS: "I and Sir Roger Gale [Thanet North MP] have done everything we can from a government perspective, getting



SHUT: It failed to take off as a viable business venture over the years, now Manston could be about to rip Chris Wells, right, and his party apart

backing from the secretary of state for transport to bring Manston back into use as an airport.

"The problem, though, is that it's not in the gift of government to do this; it has to be the local council which pushes forward with a CPO of the site, and it seems to be dragging its feet right now."

That's not an allegation which Cllr Wells is willing to take lying down. He told KoS that although there was no update on the process, he wanted a resolution quickly.

He said: "We'll only put out a communication when there's something to say. That doesn't mean nothing's happening. I don't want it dragging on."

Veteran Manston campaigner Ruth Bailey, who even went as far as standing for parliament on the single issue, says her group – Save Manston Airport – has gone out of its way to help the council make things happen.

She told KoS: "The council has asked us for a period of quiet, and for our campaigning to die down. We've respected that, but it is very frustrating to just be sat on our hands.



"We're giving the council and Chris Wells until the end of the month, and if nothing has come out then we'll be back out banging a drum and shaking some cages. There is definitely dissatisfaction that things are taking such a long time."

With four councillors now off the party's books, it has a wafer thin majority – with 29 of the 56 councillors.

Despite that, Cllr Wells says he is confident in the stability of the party, telling KoS he was 'relieved' when the four defectors left.

"A narrow majority is never totally stable, but I have no intelligence that anyone else is set to leave the party and join those who have recently gone. Ukip is still going," said Cllr Wells.

That may not be the case if the issue of Manston isn't resolved soon though.

Mr Mackinlay aired a note of warning though: "It's only one seat away from being a hung council, That's extremely worrying for Ukip."

■ **What do you think about the Manston saga? Share your views and join the debate. Write to: The Editor, KoS, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford, TN23 1PP. Or email editorial@kosmedia.co.uk.**

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S a b s m t

By Tom Pyman
tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

CELEBRITY garden designer Diarmuid Gavin helped lift the gloom of the weather as Leeds Castle was transformed into a sea of blooms and colour for its annual festival of flowers.

Kicking off on Tuesday, the event was officially opened by Mr Gavin before a range of activities took place throughout the week.

Various practical workshops were put on, including willow weaving, where specialists provided top tips on how to make the perfect basket.

Tales of the last private owner, Lady Baillie's lavish house parties and her love of flowers were recounted, as visitors learned how she planned floral displays around the castle down to the minutest detail under the guidance of her French interior designer Stéphane Boudin.

The festival concludes today (Sunday) and tickets are still available to buy on arrival.



BRIGHT: Garden designer Diarmuid Gavin sprinkled some star dust at the Leeds Castle Festival of Flowers this week. It concludes today (Sunday).



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500	800	859	£86.80	**£62.00**
500	1000	1015	£96.60	**£69.00**
500	1200	1240	£105.00	**£75.00**
500	1600	1638	£166.60	**£119.00**
500	1800	1882	£180.66	**£129.00**
600	800	995	£86.80	**£62.00**
600	1000	1174	£102.20	**£73.00**
600	1200	1439	£110.60	**£79.00**
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600	1800	2184	£184.87	**£133.00**



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Width mm	Height mm	BTU	List Price	TKM Price
400	800	725	£89.60	**£64.00**
400	1000	864	£99.40	**£71.00**
400	1200	1052	£107.80	**£77.00**
400	1600	1390	£162.00	**£116.00**
500	800	859	£93.80	**£67.00**
500	1000	1015	£101.47	**£73.00**
500	1200	1240	£110.60	**£79.00**
500	1600	1638	£169.40	**£121.00**
500	1800	1882	£183.40	**£131.00**
600	800	995	£92.40	**£66.00**
600	1000	1174	£105.00	**£75.00**
600	1200	1439	£166.20	**£83.00**
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Archbishop to open his home to Syrian refugees (but not in Kent)

With no end in sight to the crisis, Justin Welby has followed in the footsteps of the Pope and rock star Bob Geldof by offering accommodation to families fleeing Syria at his residence at Lambeth Palace

By Chris Murphy
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk



HELP: The Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby is concerned over the plight of Christians fleeting Syria as part of the current migrant crisis



FLEE: Migrants continue to arrive on the shores of southern Europe in what remains a situation politicians are struggling to control



CATHEDRAL: Canterbury will not be opened up to refugees, although they will be welcome at Lambeth Palace in London

ARCHBISHOP of Canterbury the Most Reverend Justin Welby says he will host at least one family of Syrian refugees at his London home – but ruled out taking in any at his residence in Kent.

After another week of traumatic scenes in the southern EU member states, as thousands of people continue to flee the war-ravaged country and seek refuge in Europe, there seems no immediate end in sight to the crisis.

Last weekend, the archbishop confirmed he would take "a family or two" into his home at Lambeth Palace – a gesture similar to that made by Pope Francis who said he would provide accommodation to two families at the Vatican.

In addition, Live Aid hero Bob Geldof has publicly stated he would take in refugees at his homes in London and Faversham.

The archbishop said: "This is a hugely complex and wicked crisis that underlines our human frailty and the fragility of our political systems. My heart is broken by the images and stories of men, women and children who have risked their lives to escape conflict, violence and persecution.

"There are no easy answers and my prayers are with those who find themselves fleeing persecution, as well as those who are struggling under immense pressure to develop an effective and equitable response. Now, perhaps more than ever in post-war Europe, we need to commit to joint action across Europe, acknowledging our common responsibility and our common humanity.

When KoS asked Lambeth Palace when the family were set to move in and whether any vetting of the family would be done, it refused to comment. His home in London is a four-bedroom house set in the grounds of the palace.

A spokesman explained: "As a Christian who leads the Church of England it is something he feels absolutely passionate about. As the archbishop has said, Jesus was a refugee, and there are refugees here who are desperate for sanctuary from war-torn places and the archbishop is completely torn about their situation and wants to make a difference."

As for moving a refugee family into his Kent residence, the spokesman for Lambeth Palace told us: "While he is planning to provide a cottage on the Lambeth Palace estate to a refugee family, there are no current plans in Canterbury."

That residence is the Old Palace in Canterbury, within the precincts of the cathedral. It dates back to the 11th century.

Two of Kent's other senior Church of England figures – the bishops of Rochester and Dover – said they had no plans to offer accommodation to refugee families.

A spokesman for James Langstaff, the Bishop of Rochester, said: "Unfortunately, Bishopscourt doesn't lend itself to additional permanent residents since it is both Bishop James's family home and his working office."

The bishop is also launching a Christmas appeal for Mars bars, socks, scarves, deodorant, candles and greetings card to deliver to those in what has been dubbed 'the jungle' - the sprawling camp on the outskirts of Calais which has become home to thousands of migrants seeking access to the UK.

The Right Reverend Trevor Willmott is Bishop of Dover. His spokesman said: "I have been in contact with the bishop's office and they have confirmed that the bishop has not made a similar statement regarding the accommodation of refugees."

The Diocese of Canterbury has put together an online toolkit suggesting five possible responses to the situation: Act, Serve, Campaign and Advocate, Get informed and Pray.

The spokesman said: "The bishop and the Diocese of Canterbury will continue to pray for all those affected by the ongoing crisis, as well as reflect on how their efforts are most appropriately and compassionately needed."

David Cameron said he wants to offer room in the UK for those that have fled to refugee camps in neighbouring countries like Jordan. The first to be taken in are expected to arrive shortly.

The Archbishop of Canterbury has already expressed his concerns about this policy because Christian refugees avoid the camps for fear of possible further persecution from other religious groups. This means they could be largely ignored by the UK.

Speaking at the House of Lords, the archbishop said: "Within the camps there is significant intimidation and radicalisation, and many particularly of the Christian population who have been forced to flee are unable to be in the camps."

There are reports he has met with Mr Cameron to discuss his concerns, although Lambeth Palace told us it does not comment on private meetings.

Meanwhile, it seems there is the chance of talks taking place to try and secure peace in Syria.

On Monday, Barack Obama will meet with Valdimir Putin to discuss the situation. It is a public sign that the refugee crisis and the threat of so-called Islamic State in Syria could see the world's two super powers seek a common goal.

■ **What do you think about the crisis and the nation's reaction to it? Share your views and join the debate.**

Write to: The Editor, KoS, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford, TN23 1PP. Or email editorial@kosmedia.co.uk.

Collections causing Calais chaos

After a huge wave of support, those behind some of the county's biggest collections for the migrants say the number of cars and vans arriving at 'the jungle' to deposit donations is getting out of hand

By Tom Pyman
tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

COLLECTIONS taking place across the county to help migrants gathering in Calais have been described as 'overwhelming'.

But one fundraiser, who visited what has become known as 'the jungle' near the French port where thousands of migrants have gathered seeking access to the UK just last weekend, says she witnessed scenes of 'chaos' as dozens of donations crammed in the back of cars and vans, queued up to drop off supplies to the camp.

Now she is calling for more co-ordination to ensure the aid is better distributed.

Bridget Chapman is part of the Folkestone United community group, which describes itself as a non-political organisation that stands against all forms of intolerance.

She told KoS: "People have been extremely generous but the camp in Calais is becoming completely overwhelmed.

"A lot of people were turning up with stuff that wasn't needed. It's great that people want to help but sometimes it gets too overwhelming and the process needs to be managed more strategically.

"I went down there last Sunday and it was just chaos; people bringing aid were queuing for miles and some even had to go back across the Channel because it became so crowded.

"There was a massive panic as drivers opened up the back of their vans which were full to the brim. We've seen stuff fall out and get ruined in the mud which is a real shame.

"I'd advise that people make contact with organisations that are working on the ground, get a list of the essentials and then make arrangements."



DONATION: A migrant in Calais with clothes supplied by people in Kent

Jasmin O'Hara, from Tunbridge Wells, is behind CalAid, an online fundraising effort which co-ordinates funds and has so far raised £157,000.

It encourages cash donations or specific items.

She told us: "Kent as a county have been superb but the British public as a whole have reacted very positively. The response has been overwhelming and we've been inundated with donations. It's important that everyone has their basic needs covered in any country.

"I've made a lot of friends at the camp in Calais who are very open and welcoming. I have an incredible time listening to the most heroic stories from so many interesting and well-educated people.

"It only takes me an hour and a half to get from my house to Calais – it's shocking people are living like that so close to us.

"We're not talking an earthquake in Nepal that we kind of distance ourselves from a little bit because it's so far away, this is happening on our doorstep."

Such has been the reaction from the people of Kent, she says CalAid recently saw more than 400 vans turn up in one day to drop off items donated by the people of Kent.

Finding ways to store everything that has been donated is proving one of the biggest issues, which is why Miss Chapman, from Folkestone United, believes it would be more beneficial for supporters to donate money to the cause – rather than driving to Calais themselves and adding to the congestion.

She explained: "Donated tents are great in the short term. A lot of people will pass on ones they've used at festivals like Glastonbury, for example, but they're not built to last and we want to create accommodation with longevity.

"What they really need is money, and so far we've received about £4,000 in collections. We, and the people on the ground, know what these people really need and we can use that money to buy it.

"If you have old clothes, why not have a jumble sale or a car boot sale? If we keep getting donated clothes and things at this rate it will just become too much."

Miss O'Hara agrees that the donations need to be managed sensibly in order for the migrants to benefit.

"We are trying to stockpile everything we've received and slowly and strategically drip-feed it into the camp so that we are not left short during the winter when it will be especially cold and difficult," she said.

The question now is whether the public's attention span on the plight of the migrants will continue.

Miss O'Hara said: "I'm not naive and I understand that it is a hot topic in the press and everyone is talking about it, which definitely helps with this large push. We're making a documentary soon and we hope that will keep interest levels high and help encourage people to keep donating."

■ **What do you think? Share you views and join the debate. Write to: The Editor, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford TN23 1PP. Email editorial@kosmedia.co.uk.**



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D lin p k p

By Chris Britcher
c h

A 92-year-old proved age was no barrier as he took part in a charity fun run last weekend for one of the county's best loved charities.

John Hart, who turned 93 on Monday, joined hundreds of supporters gathered to take part in the annual Demelza Run at Leeds Castle last Sunday, with competitors taking part in either a 5km or 10km contest.

Among those taking part were fundraisers, staff, and volunteers and Demelza families.

Demelza runs a children's hospice service, with its main headquarters in Bobbing, near Sittingbourne and another hospice in Eltham, south east London.

It has developed a reputation for its specialist services – including day, short-stay and end-of-life care, as well as therapies and bereavement support for families.

It provides care for more than 800 children and their families.

Around 650 runners took part in last weekend's fundraiser, with 12 running clubs joining the ranks.

The 10km race was started by Demelza child Millie De'Vere. It was won by Niall Stewart in a time of 36 minutes 59 seconds; Kieran Hughes came second and Richard Hunter scooped third place.

The first child to finish the 10km was 12-year-old Ben Smith and Eloise Smith was the first female over the finish line.

The 5km race was won by Paul Moates in a time of 19 minutes 42 seconds, with Luke Hurton second and Jessica Carley coming third. Jessica was also the first female and child to come in for the 5km.

Gemma Murray, Demelza's events coordinator, said: "Thank you so much to everyone who joined us on a beautiful sunny, if slightly muddy, Sunday morning to take part in our 11th Demelza Run. It was great to see so many families, running clubs and people dressed up. It was an amazing atmosphere with a serious purpose – to raise as much money as possible for our vital hospice service."

The charity's mascot, Dotty was there to spur competitors on and to pose for selfies and Heart FM DJ Neil Kefford was compere. Colourful Tunbridge Wells and Maidstone drumming group Bloco Fogo was also there to entertain runners before the start of the run.

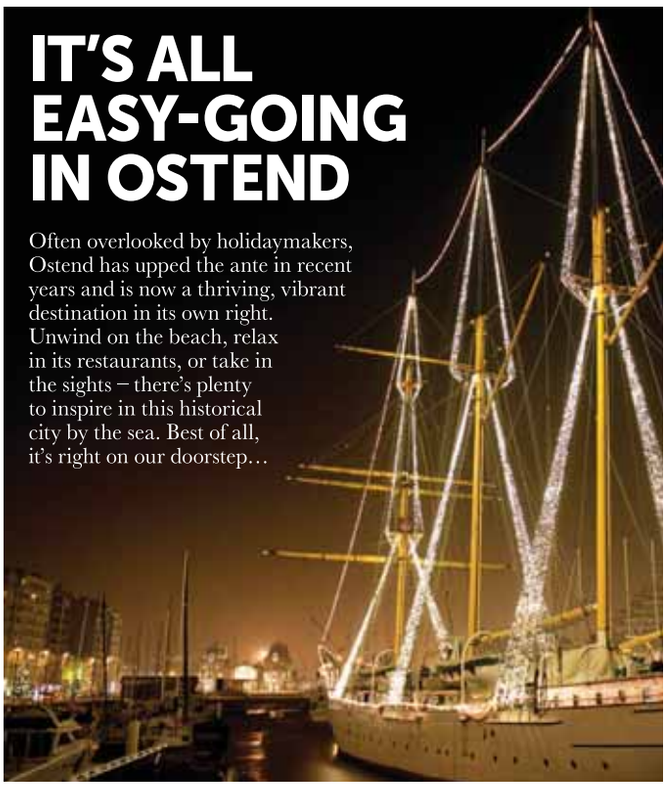


CROWD: Some 650 took part in a 5k or 10k race at Leeds Castle

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Often overlooked by holidaymakers, Ostend has upped the ante in recent years and is now a thriving, vibrant destination in its own right. Unwind on the beach, relax in its restaurants, or take in the sights – there's plenty to inspire in this historical city by the sea. Best of all, it's right on our doorstep…



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FROM THE SEA...

As you'd expect, the city has a rich maritime history: a story that's retold in the **City Museum**, on board the **Amandine museum ship** and at the impressive **Napoleonic Fort** that rises forbiddingly above the dunes – a great place to take in the view, or enjoy lunch on the terrace.

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MORE MUST-DOS

Art lovers shouldn't miss a visit to **James Ensor's** home and studio and the **Art Museum by the Sea**, which showcases this colourful, often scandalous, Belgian artist's work.

Students of the Great War can follow a **digital walking tour** of the city based on the diary of a 52-year-old tram worker, recounting his experiences of a war-torn 1914 Ostend.

And anyone into their classic Soul should take the **Midnight Love Tour** to find out how **Marvin Gaye** overcame addiction and depression, and was inspired to write one of his biggest hits, *Sexual Healing*, during his two-year stay in the city.

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P&O FERRIES

Game of Thrones make-up expert demonstrates skill

The normally fresh-faced KoS reporter **Molly Kersey** meets Hollywood special effects expert David Brown to experience just what it is like to spend hours in the make-up chair as he demonstrates his remarkable art form at a Dartford theatre



CHANGE: Our reporter Molly Kersey prepares for transformation, left, as she arrives at the Orchard Theatre and, above, as she is slowly turned into a chemical spill victim

MANY of the modern Hollywood films and hit TV shows that keep audiences glued to their screens are full of bloody battles, high action scenes and gore.

For most people who see one of the characters killed or injured, it is nothing more than a dramatic plot twist.

But for special effects make-up artists like David Brown, it is a little different.

Mr Brown, who has worked on sci-fi film Guardians of the Galaxy and hugely successful TV series Game of Thrones, puts in a massive amount of work behind the scenes to make sure that everything looks as seamless and realistic as possible – playing an important role in creating the dramatic sequences.

His work varies hugely, and he has helped create aliens, bullet wounds and burns – to name just a few.

And he pays painstakingly close attention to detail to make it happen.

"It's not just the piece you are working on – it's thinking about why it has happened. If it's a burn, were they playing with chemicals, or in a fire?

"Which direction did the wound come from? It's the same with bullet wounds as well," he told KoS.

And when creating burns, he'll put the actor in a wig, allowing him to singe the hair and make it look more realistic.

"If you have long beautiful hair, and then a burn, it can look a bit unnatural," he added.

The public will get a chance to hear and see the sort of work he can create when the show Hollywood Special Effects rolls into the Orchard Theatre in Dartford next month.

And KoS was lucky enough to get up close and personal with some of his creations this week.

I've been invited to the theatre to be a willing volunteer – and witness first hand how the artist transforms the faces of those who sit in his chair.

For while I sit safely in a make-up room, my face is to be transformed to give the impression of a chemical burn down the side of my face and neck.

Trying to keep a straight face, on the other hand as someone disfigures you – painlessly – is no easy task.

"It does my work no favours if you smile, people won't believe it's true," jokes Mr Brown, as I grin into the mirror.

To begin the process he wipes my face with witchhazel to remove any excess oil and ensure the make-up sticks to my face properly.

Then he begins to create the wound – producing three pots, which he shows to me.

"There's part A, B and C. A and B is actual silicone, you mix these two together and a chemical reaction takes place. That starts to set and it will solidify. Part C is what is called a 'deadener', which is what softens the silicone. It's kind of like adding in oil to the silicone, the more of it you add the softer it gets, but also the stickier it gets as well," he explains.



7th & 8th November 2015

This year there will be lights, camera and action for the Leeds Castle Firework Spectacular. Timed to music from the movies and with projections on the Castle themed to the silver screen, Hollywood is coming to Kent. Arrive from 2pm to enjoy the food and entertainment before the display starts at 5.30pm.

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RESULT: After two hours in the chair, Molly finds herself with a major facial scar courtesy of the make-up expert

"You can deaden silicone to the same softness as your flesh, but of course, the softer it is the more delicate it is. You can poke your cheek and you're not going to go through it, but you do that to soft silicone and your finger will."

And once the make-up has been applied, it has to be taken care of throughout the day.

"If you are on set for 10 hours, you are looking after your make-up for 10 hours. You're making sure all the edges are still stuck down, that the colour isn't rubbing off, that it doesn't need to be touched up or anything like that. Most of the time people remember they are wearing something."

Once he has mixed A, B and C together, he adds colours in to try and get the right tone.

"In our skin we have yellow, blue, green, red – primary colours and secondary colours are all there in different percentages. What you are trying to do with this isn't to match your skin tone exactly, it's to match your base tone," he explained.

He uses pieces of plastic, used to make bald caps, to place between the layers of silicone and add texture, subtly creating the piece.

"You can't dissolve silicone and it won't stick to anything except itself, so you have to sandwich it between two layers. That's why you use the cap plastic," he said.

Once this is completed, he adds fake pus and blood to the wound, making it look realistic – and painful.

"You would get blood rushing to the surface of the skin, you would get that patchiness. It's a defence mechanism of the body, it's trying to suddenly heal itself and it does that through blood," he said.

The work makes you appreciate why some actors speak of the strain of working when heavily made-up. Altering my face takes a good couple of hours, but pales in comparison to some of the applications that Mr Brown has carried out over the course of his career.

"After a while you do get a nice rapport with the people in your chair," he said.

"On Game of Thrones, the White Walker King's make-up took six hours every day," he said. "Their call was at 12.50am to start. They brought in special chairs, that were like barber shop chairs, so they could rest their arms and lay back, and he just fell asleep.

"He then had to do an 11-hour day of stunts and things like that. He would have breakfast at around 6.30am, have a half an hour break and then go on set to start and we would finish about 6-7pm.

"They were really long days. It was in a quarry in Belfast."

The final series was filmed in warmer climes – in Seville, Spain.

"When we were in Seville there were about 800 crew, it was absolutely massive," he said.

He helped create the scene where a contender gets beheaded in the infamous fighting pits as Daenerys Targaryen and Tyrion watch on.

"We made the body that is lying on the floor. It had silicone skin that had been painted and then filled with foam. There was a bicycle brake inside, and when you pulled it, it released the blood."

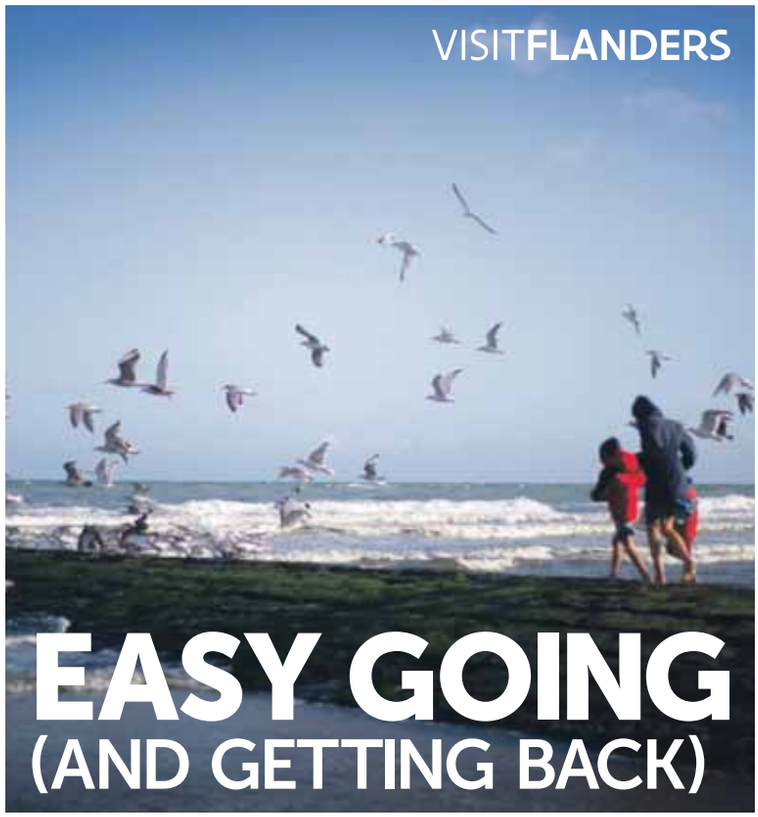
■ **Hollywood Special Effects Show will be at the Orchard Theatre on October 4. For ticket details visit www.orchardtheatre.co.uk.**



TRICKS OF THE TRADE: Not your usual range of make-up colours



TALENT: David Brown and the tools of his trade, has worked on movies like Guardians of the Galaxy and the long-running hit Sky TV show, Game of Thrones



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Book offers glimpse of towns over the centuries



Luke May takes a stroll back through time as he speaks to the co-author of a book which gathers historic images from across parts of the Medway towns





A FASCINATING set of photographs charting parts of Medway from the 16th to the 19th century are to published next month.

Contained within the book Rochester, Strood & The Hoo Peninsula - From Old Photographs, it has been compiled by authors Brian Joyce and Sophie Miller.

There are more than 200 images, taking the reader on a walk through time, charting the changing scenery, architecture and domestic life in the fascinating region.

Mr Joyce, who is also president of the Chatham Historical Society, said one of his motivations was to put Rochester into context in terms of its historic background.

He told KoS: "It's not just castles and cathedrals; it's the real Rochester, which was an industrial town as well. Of course you can't leave out the cathedrals, but we wanted to portray Rochester for what it is."

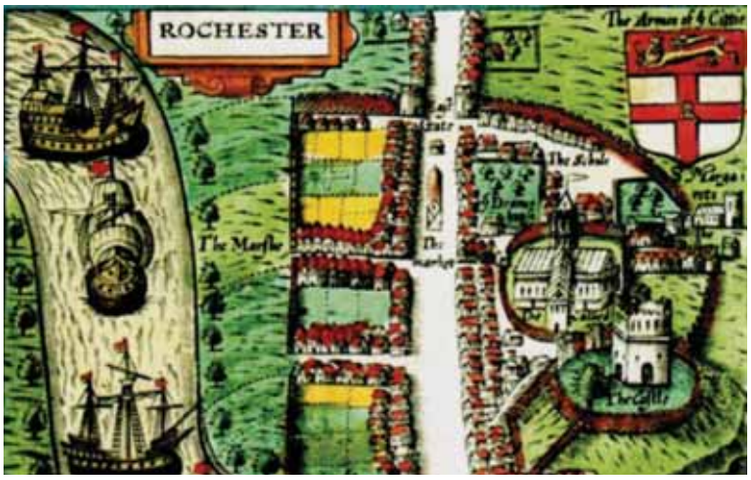
Mr Joyce, who grew up in and around the area, added: "Strood and the Hoo are massively important as well, and I wanted to feature them for what they are too."

Other areas featured include Allhallows and the Isle of Grain.

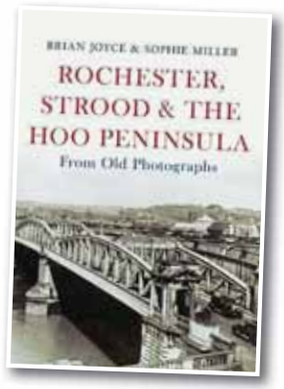
Together with teaching graduate Sophie Miller, the two authors are publishing their third contribution to the national book series 'From Old Photographs' – previous efforts focused on the evolution of other Medway towns, Gillingham and Chatham.

■ **Rochester, Strood & the Hoo Peninsula will be published on October 15 by Amberley, and is available in paperback as well as digital format. The paperback will cost £14.99.**









HISTORY: Images through the years are showcased in a new book. Includes: Port Victoria station in Rochester, below, the beach at All-hallows, left, St Bartholomew's Hospital, top left, and pubs in Strood, far left



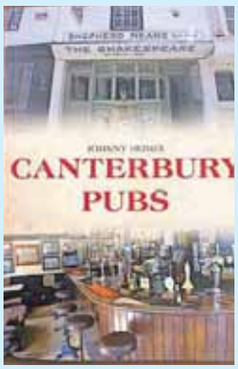
CHEERS! CITY'S PUBS UNDER SPOTLIGHT

AS THOUSANDS of students descend on Canterbury for freshers' week, the popularity of the cathedral city's alehouses and breweries has now been recognised in a new book.

Canterbury Pubs gives an overview of 50 of the city's finest watering holes and is penned by Johnny Homer, a journalist and former broadcaster who lives in Whitstable.

He explained to KoS: "I'm very interested in pub culture and the social history of pubs. Canterbury has no shortage of pubs and, for me, it's the people who go there that make them special.

"You have some pubs that are so traditional and down-to-earth and the fact they're still surviving and doing well is heart-warming. There are so many beautiful pubs with great



stories to tell."

The book outlines a range of tales – from pubs inspired by the slaying of Thomas Becket in 1170, to those that suffered bomb damage from German air raids during the war.

Mr Homer says that the diverse range of pubs available to drinkers was a big inspiration behind his decision to write the book: "What I like about the Canterbury area is the sheer cross-section of places available. As well as these charming old pubs there are plenty of lovely new places, primarily, I suppose, aimed at the student population. It really feels as if there's something for everyone."

The book is broken down into those pubs located within the city walls, those outside, and those a little further afield, and the author claims the research process was a lot more arduous and time-consuming than sinking a pint of bitter in each watering hole.

■ **Canterbury Pubs is published by Amberley and costs £14.99. It is available now in paperback and digital formats.**

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OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK

Pioneering family that tasted triumph and tragedy celebrated

A new exhibition will be examining the impact that three generations of the influential Salomons family, who lived in Southborough, had on the town and on the wider world, writes **Molly Kersey**....

THERE is no denying that in so many respects, the Salomons were a family who were way ahead of their time.

Throughout three generations, the family challenged prejudices, fighting for equality for women and people of different religious backgrounds.

They pioneered exciting new developments, playing a part in the progression of society as a whole and triumphing in areas such as civil rights, electrical engineering and motoring.

And the family spent a number of years in Tunbridge Wells, living in an elegant country house in Southborough, with their work leaving a lasting legacy for the town.

An exhibition at the Tunbridge Wells Museum & Art Gallery will explore the lives of the influential family, examining the impact their work had on an ever-changing nation.

Sir David Salomons rose to prominence after he became the first Jewish Lord Mayor of London.

He was a key player in the struggle for Jewish emancipation in the 19th century.

Curator at the museum, Ian Beavis, explained: "There were major obstacles for Jewish people taking any kind of civic or military office, because they all had to take an oath which included the words 'on the true faith of a Christian'.

"He was one of the leading lights in the campaign to break down those barriers, which he managed to do step by step."

After being elected as an MP for Greenwich in 1851, he took the oath in the House of Commons but missed out the offending words in protest, defending his position in a speech.

"He was fined £500 for contempt of Parliament," added Dr Beavis.

"He felt that Jewish people wanted to play their full part in public life.

"He inspired the idea that they had been there for a long time, were loyal citizens of Britain and contributed in so many ways, but were excluded from the corridors of power, and how grossly unfair that was.

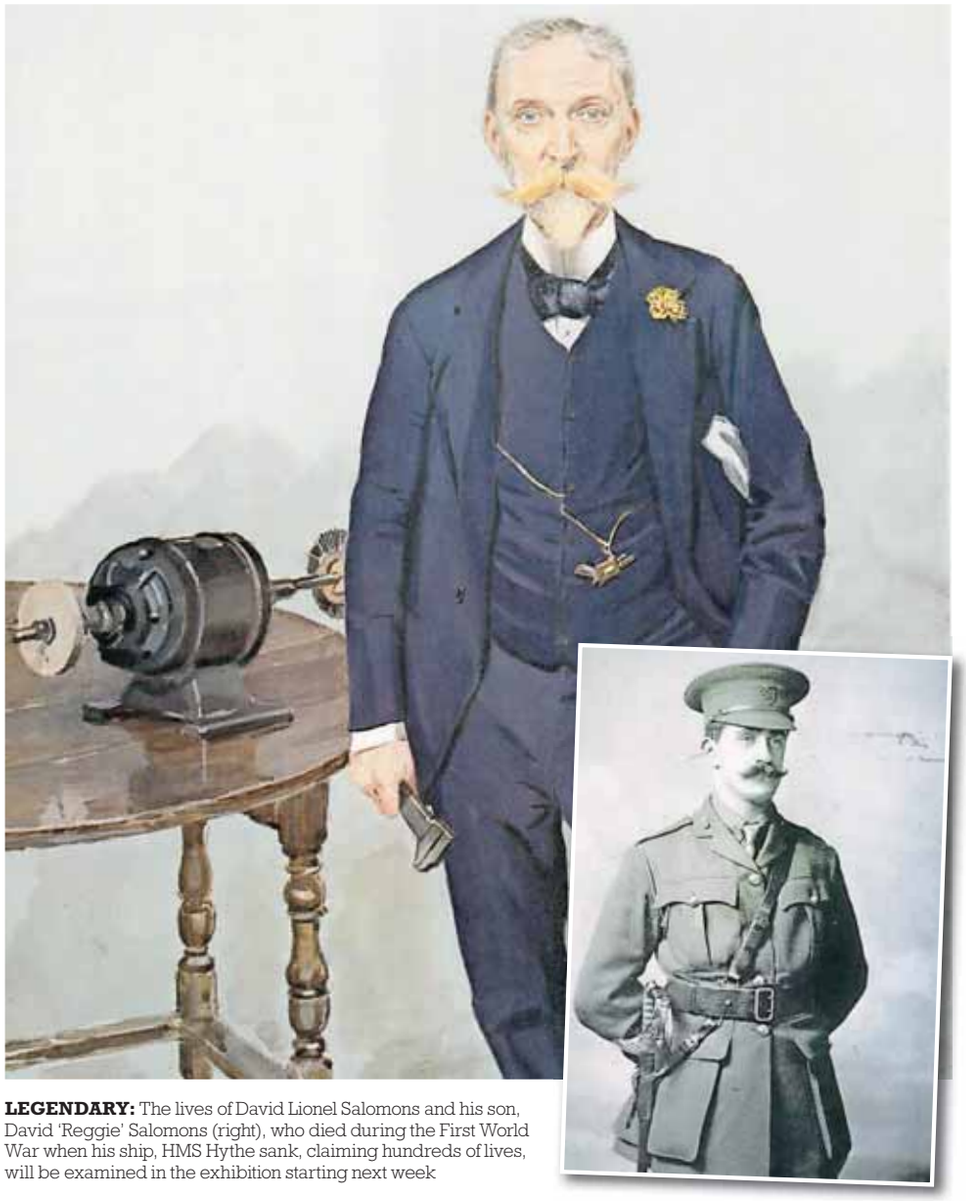
"He was definitely keen on removing all kinds of discrimination and inequality. It wasn't just in the interest of his own faith.

"The atheists and freethinkers had similar problems with taking a Christian oath."

Sir David eventually made the decision to move out of the capital, relocating to the county with his wife Jeanette.

"He was looking for a county seat that was within easy reach of London. For a time he owned Burswood as well at Groombridge, and eventually settled near Southborough," said Dr Beavis.

In 1839, he took up the post of the High Sheriff of Kent, and remained at the Broomhill estate, which is now the Salomons Museum.



LEGENDARY: The lives of David Lionel Salomons and his son, David 'Reggie' Salomons (right), who died during the First World War when his ship, HMS Hythe sank, claiming hundreds of lives, will be examined in the exhibition starting next week

And the estate remained in the family for decades – being passed down to David Lionel Salomons after Sir David's death.

"When Sir David was made a baron it was appreciated that he had no children of his own and wasn't likely to, so it was agreed that his nephew could succeed," said Dr Beavis.

"For all intents and purposes his nephew was his adopted son, his parents died quite young and he and his sister were brought up by their uncle at Broomhill."

And, just like his uncle before him, his nephew had a number of impressive achievements to his name.

He had many strings to his bow, and was well-known and respected for his skills as a scientist, engineer, photographer and inventor.

"He was an active amateur scientist and engineer, we say amateur because he was proud of the fact that he never made any money out of it," said Dr Beavis.

"He helped to introduce electricity to Tunbridge Wells."

In fact, he was one of the first people in the country to introduce electricity into his home, with a dynamo installed at Broomhill in 1896.

"When it was introduced he organised an exhibition of new technology to show you could use electricity for cooking and ironing and all sorts of other things as well," said Dr Beavis.

"He was a pioneer of motoring, which was his greatest claim to fame.

"In 1895 he held Britain's very first motor show."

The show was held on the area that is now well-known as Showfields in Tunbridge Wells.

"A lot of people in Britain were very suspicious of this new technology and he managed to convince people that this was the future and it was valuable technology," Dr Beavis explained. "He hoped Britain would wake up and lead the way in making motor cars."

As well as these impressive achievements, he was also something of a community stalwart, serving as a county councillor in the Tonbridge division of Kent for some 15 years and taking up the post of Mayor of Tunbridge Wells.

"He was mayor for just one year. They wanted him to carry on but he declined, although he was involved in the council as an Alderman," explained Dr Beavis.

"He was at Kent County Council. He held a lot of these offices, and he did actually stand for Parliament but he wasn't successful."

"He was very keen on women's rights. He wrote a pamphlet called 'An Address to the Ladies of England', which addressed better education and employment opportunities for women."

Sir David Lionel outlived his only son, David 'Reggie' Salomons, who has become well-known for his bravery in Gallipoli, where he refused to leave his men on HMS Hythe as it sank. His heroic self-sacrifice has now been commemorated in West End musical The Dreamers.

"Reggie died sadly in the First World War. His father lived on another 10 years until 1925. Reggie would have been the third baronet," adds the historian. "I did a bit of background on him for the show to try and make him a more three dimensional figure, because in a sense he has been remembered just for those climatic few moments on the sinking ship.

"He is not just a victim. He believed in his military career and it was very important to him, but there were other sides to him.

"We discovered he travelled quite extensively in the years before the war, in Europe and the Far East.

"He was in Japan in 1910. He was deeply interested in Japanese culture and spirituality and he went on to learn the language and write a book about his experiences, which was sadly never published."

He showed a real interest in Buddhism in the book, echoing the interest that his earlier family members had shown in different religions.

"It's a real picture of wanting to build bridges and understand other cultures," he added.

"His sister Vera inherited Broomhill ultimately. She was the last surviving child. She gave it to the county of Kent for the public benefit in the late 1930s, so relatively early on. It has been used for various functions."

■ **The Salomons of Tunbridge Wells: Liberator, Innovator, Hero exhibition will be shown at the Tunbridge Wells Museum from October 2 to January 3 2016.**

For more information about the exhibition and what it has to offer, visit the museum's website www.tunbridgewellsmuseum.org.





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Calls to make rugby safer kicked into touch by Maidstone player

The Rugby World Cup has put the spotlight firmly on the sport, but calls to change the rules of tackling to reduce dangerous concussions are dividing fans and players of the game in the county

Jamie Weir
jamie.weir@archant.co.uk

BIG hits, bone crunching tackles, and blood smeared faces are regular sights on the rugby field.

For many fans of the sport, it is the physicality of the game, and power of the players which makes it what it is. Without those tackles they say, it simply wouldn't be the same sport.

But as the biggest prize in the sport – the Webb Ellis trophy – rolled in to Twickenham last week to open the Rugby World Cup, calls for changes to the game to make it safer came from an unlikely corner.

Those calls came from World Rugby's – the organisation which promotes the sport across the globe – chief medical officer, Martin Rafferty, who told BBC Panorama rule changes to tackling should be made.

Dr Rafferty said that following a review of 900 videos of concussion incidents, changing rules to make tackling safer would help combat a rise in the injury.

He said: "There's no doubt that the biggest area that we think, that we know where concussion is going to occur is in the tackle, so that will help us to look at the tackle and see what we can do to make it safer. I think that my job is to identify risk and then look for solutions to the law makers to make the changes that will bring about protection of the athlete."

The medical man was backed up by colleagues too, with the team doctor of the British and Irish Lions, James Robson, saying that the laws of rugby needed to be examined.

But many who play the sport at grass-roots level across the county say that to alter the rules of tackling, would be to slowly wipe out the game they love.

Bob Hayton plays with Maidstone Rugby Football Club, which went to Twickenham to play in the finals of the Intermediate Cup in May this year. The club has had its fair share of injuries through the years, with one player stretchered off the pitch with a broken vertebrae and another incident when the club was fined for eye-gouging. Concussions though, says Mr Hayton have not increased in his view.

He said: "They're saying that we're getting more concussion injuries at a grass-roots level, but I really don't think that's the case at all. We are simply more aware of this type of injury now, when, in the past perhaps coaches and players weren't as educated on the issue."

The player and fan is unrepentant about the importance of the physical aspects of the game.

He said: "Given it's a contact sport, physical size and power is important. No-one wants to see that neutered with rule changes. It may make it safer, but it would make it sterile, and less enjoyable for everyone involved. The problem with the world today is it's risk-averse about almost everything."



POWER: The physical nature the sport means injuries are commonplace on the rugby pitch

One aspect which is likely to concern many, is schoolboy rugby. With many schools across the county taking part in regular rugby training and matches, injuries are always likely. The Rugby Football Union – which governs the sport in England – said that often schoolboy injuries were not reported.

A statement from the RFU said: "In our study of 16 to 18-year-olds, although 66 per cent felt a concussion was a serious injury, only 44 per cent were aware that there were the regulations requiring them to stand down from playing for a period and gain medical clearance before returning to play. Of those who felt that they had been concussed in the preceding two seasons, worryingly, 66 per cent of this group said they did not leave the field after that concussion, and 38 per cent said they did not report their concussion to anyone, while only 10 per cent said they waited the stipulated three-week stand down before returning to play."

The Independent Schools' Association – a charity which represents many of Kent's public schools – says that a balance must be struck between risk and safety when it comes to schoolboy rugby. Chairman of the organisation Sarah Welch said that many schools employed different rules for different age groups.

Dr Welch told KoS: "When it comes to school rugby, it's important that it is both safe and a positive educational experience for all the pupils involved. The laws have changed significantly in recent years to protect players' safety. Different age grades have appropriate laws to ease them into contact. Yet there are still concerns regarding injury."

Dr Welch believes things have changed in recent years, with a greater emphasis being placed on training for coaches.

"A game like rugby requires coaches and referees who understand the game and empathise with players. I would hope that a PE teacher, Deputy Head or Sixth Form student without any proper training putting a whistle around his neck and running a game is a thing of the past, but it is important that all schools ensure the staff involved are both fully qualified and have recent experience of the game.

"Any contact sport comes with risks, but those risks can be mitigated by making sure that players are coached effectively and that matches are conducted with safety and enjoyment as the priorities – rather than winning at any cost.

"Communication with parents is also key. If they understand the game, the training the players undergo, the safety measures that are put in place, they can support the school in giving young people the opportunity to develop skills and take part in a marvellous sport."

The RFU introduced a campaign called Don't be a Headcase, which aims to tackle the issue of concussion. Mr Hayton said that he felt this went far enough, helping ensure everyone knew how to deal with the injury.

He said: "Thanks to the RFU's headcase campaign, there's a far better understanding of concussion at a lower level. We baseline test all of our players at the beginning of the season to make sure if we feel there's any danger they're concussed, we can find out before letting them back onto the pitch. We're better educated in concussion, and I think that we're dealing with it effectively now.

"At the end of the day, I choose to play, accept the risks and enjoy the game. There's no need to alter the rules of tackling, and I believe that if that happened it would end up damaging the game and losing support."

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For sale: Rock star's £3.5m home

Fleetwood Mac legend Christine McVie has put house in Kent countryside on the market after rejoining band

FLEETWOOD Mac star Christine McVie is selling her magnificent Kent mansion for £3.5 million.

The 72-year-old singer and keyboard player has lived in the Grade II-listed property in Wickhambreaux, near Canterbury, since 1990.

But she's decided to sell the six-bedroom home after the band's successful reunion saw her able to spend less and less time at her Kent retreat.

Fleetwood Mac, originally formed in 1967, have sold more than 100 million records worldwide and recorded hits throughout the decades.

Ms McVie joined in 1970.

She intends to use the funds generated to allow her to buy a home in London.

Set in 19 acres, it has undergone major restoration since she took over and is now on the market through agents Strutt and Parker.

The house includes four reception rooms for entertaining varying numbers of celeb guests, a three-bedroom outhouse, two cottages and those sprawling gardens.

And don't forget the converted barn, paddocks, thatched stable,

Ms McVie had long resisted calls to reunite with the super group after retiring from live performances in 1998, but gave in to temptation for their recent world tour which has played to sell-out arenas and generated millions for the group.

Among her songwriting credits for the band are the likes of Don't Stop and Little Lies – a huge hit from the Rumours album.

While at her home in Kent, it is thought she penned a lot of her solo material there once the band disintegrated in the 1980s.

The fractured relationships within the band – which features Mick Fleetwood, Lindsay Buckingham, Stevie Nicks, and John McVie, her former husband – are the stuff of rock legend.

Simon Backhouse, of Strutt and Parker, said: "Christine McVie bought this house in 1990 and when she did it was in a bit of a state.

"She has spent an enormous amount of money on it since then, putting a new roof on it and restoring it to its former glory.

"She has family in Kent and it's a very beautiful and private house. It's quiet and you can't see it from anywhere so that ticked a lot of boxes for her.

"The house itself is stunning and the village it's in is a quintessential chocolate box village.

"She's looking to upsize in London and downsize in the country."

Named The Quaives, the house is new to the market but already there has been much interest in it.

"Whether you are a music fan or not, this is an incredible opportunity to own something very special indeed," added the agent.

Previously of the Kent house, she has said: "I have whiled away many peaceful days song writing in this tranquil home. Much fun was had by all on the croquet lawn."

Fleetwood Mac played four sell-out shows at the O2 Arena in Greenwich in June.













PLUSH: The Grade II-listed property offers six bedrooms and four reception rooms in a secluded village setting

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Gogglebox stars branch out as book hits shelves

From running a plush B&B in Sandwich to starring in perhaps the most unusual TV hit in the past decade, KoS catches up with Gogglebox stars Steph and Dom...

By Luke May
luke.may@archant.co.uk

GOGGLEBOX has become something akin to Marmite television – either you find it one of the most amusing and fascinating shows or you have no idea why on earth anyone would want to watch it.

It is, after all, simply a case of watching people watching television (see box). Yet it has ushered in the latest phase of reality TV stars.

And most notable among them are Steph and Dom Parker - the 'posh couple'. Courtesy of their quips, upper class tones and penchant for a well-stocked drinks cabinet, they have elevated themselves from the owners of a bed and breakfast in Sandwich, to national TV stars.

Now they are looking to cash-in on their fame with a new book – Steph & Dom's Guide to Life.

In truth, it is unlikely to be challenging for the Booker prize.

The book's promotional blurb quotes the couple as describing the book as "a bloody useful little thing with all the wisdom we've collected over the years – so sit back, pour yourself a drink and let us be your booze consultants, your style gurus, your pub lunch professionals and your maverick marriage counsellor".

And it is as a result of a frenzied week of publicity, which saw them appear on BBC1's The One Show among others – that KoS grabs a few minutes with reality TV's most unlikely stars.

Certainly it's all a long way from their day job – running The Salutation, a luxurious Grade I-listed building, set within Sandwich's historic city walls and surrounded by grounds of three-and-a-half acres, which the owners describe as "without doubt the finest place to stay in Kent".

"With a house like this," Steph Parker explains, "we aren't owners we're custodians. We think we've done a great job looking after the beautiful building and gardens, and hope the next owners continue to look after the house as we did."

Just last year they put the property on the market with a price tag of £4.5m. Having failed to sell it, today they say "we're not in the process of selling at this time".

Her husband adds: "In fairness, one of the reasons we've written this book is to hopefully maintain the gardens and the house."

But isn't a celebrity derived from simply being filmed watching the television, the most bizarre and shallow form of fame?

While Mr Parker described Gogglebox as a "unique phenomenon", his wife believes the show has done far more for the public than simply let them get a glimpse into their living room:

"I think Gogglebox is a terrific social experiment," he tells KoS, "it's fascinating and compelling, as it shows people from up and down the country, from all sorts of social and ethnic backgrounds.

"I think it came about at a time when the country was very disconnected, there was a heavy depression as people didn't have much money, but it showed a strong connection throughout the country.

"It really showed a connection in that actually much of Britain feels the same about most topics.

"I think one thing this series has done is give people from across the country a bit of a better impression of those of us who live in the home counties; that we are capable of having a laugh and we are normal."

After 17 years of marriage, it has certainly been an unexpected twist.

No strangers to TV, before being approached to appear on the first series of Gogglebox in 2013, the couple previous appeared on the Channel 4 show Four in a Bed. Not as raunchy as it sounds, it followed four B&B owners staying in one another's properties and paying what they thought was a fair price.

They assumed that would be their "five minutes of fame" but fate would have other ideas – as did Channel 4.

Now, with the sixth season under way, they are established celebrities - a fact underlined after crowds gathered to get a signed copy of their new book during a meet and greet in Waterstones at Bluewater on Saturday.

But what of the 'posh' tag they themselves use to promote themselves? "We aren't for or against it," Mr Parker explains. "We don't consider ourselves posh but it seems to have stuck."

Certainly fame has taken them on a rather odd route. In the run up to the general election, they swapped watching the news to generating it, as they interviewed Ukip leader Nigel Farage as he attempted to win the hotly contested South Thanet seat.

They were filmed dining and eating with the MEP. Mr Parker explained: "We were absolutely gobsmacked when he was put forward, but I believe the timing was right as he was making quite a storm in the national press."

His wife added: "I think it came out very well. He's very charming and opinionated."

Now, though, the focus is on promoting themselves.

Mr Parker explained: "The book came about because of the funny little anecdotes we've made across the show, it's quite funny really.

"In no way is the book autobiographical but it really does say a lot about us."

■ **Steph & Dom's Guide To Life is published by Hodder & Stoughton and is available now as a hardback of ebook, priced at £14.99.**



NEVER WATCHED GOGGLEBOX?

THERE can be few more bizarre television programmes than Channel 4's Gogglebox.

For the uninitiated, the show is no more or less than a camera trained on a host of families and couples as they watch the week's television.

Yet the reactions and interactions between the viewers as we stare back at them, ensure millions tune in each week to watch.

Now in a remarkable sixth season, when the fifth arrived earlier this year, it pulled in four million viewers and was the number one Friday night show.

TV critics hail the programme as something of a masterstroke – extending our apparently insatiable appetite for reality television.

It won a Bafta for best reality show and its latest outing continues to gather the plaudits.

The Guardian's TV critic Filipa Jodelka wrote recently: ''It's a kind of televisual Mo Mowlam, holding the hand of every cultural tribe, consoling us all with the presence of two important things: the first, a concept so dumbed-down it borders on sinister; the second, the stripped back, 'humanity at its truest' air of an anthropological study – something Big Brother lost years ago.''

As the show developed, the public quickly developed favourite contributors from the families and friends featured.

Comfortably the most famous of them all have been Sandwich's upper class pairing of Steph and Dom.

Ranging in diverse social and ethnic backgrounds, the weekly programme attempts to portray the thoughts of families across modern day Britain.

From X Factor auditions to the general election and everything in between, Gogglebox contributors have commented on some of the biggest social and political points to grace our screens over the past two years.

After gaining popularity in the UK, the show's premise has been repeated across the world, with series across Europe, the US and even stretching as far as China and Australia.

■ **Gogglebox airs on Channel 4 at 9pm on Friday.**






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FOCUS: County Hall chiefs insist they have no regrets about the way they are investing the pensions of its many thousand workers

KCC hits back in fresh row over pension funds

Four years after it was revealed it was putting money into tobacco firms, now Friends of the Earth have uncovered investments in fossil fuels too

By Jamie Weir
jamie.weir@archant.co.uk

KENT County Council's finance chief John Simmonds says he's 'unapologetic' after it emerged the local authority's pension fund invests hundreds of millions of pounds in the fossil fuel industry.

The figure – according to research from green campaign groups Friends of the Earth, 350.org and Platform – sits at £324 million which is almost eight per cent of KCC's total pension pot investments.

The money is that from local authority workers who pay into its pension fund and which, in turn, are invested in various industries with a view to generating a return.

But Cllr Simmonds – KCC's deputy leader and cabinet member for finance and procurement – says that fossil fuels are not only a perfectly good place to park the cash, but he'd be failing in his duty if funds weren't invested in the sector.

He told KoS: "Our prime responsibility is to get the best possible return for those who invest in the pension fund, and who will need it when they retire. There is nothing illegal about investing in fossil fuels, so I don't think we should feel bad about this."

Campaigners against investing in fossil fuels disagree, with Brenda Pollack, who works for Friends of the Earth taking aim at the council.

She said: "Many people working for councils and schools across Kent will be concerned to learn that their future is tied up with such a risky and polluting industry.

"There are financial risks in investing in fossil fuel funds as governments start taking action to avoid climate change. It is the right decision both financially and ethically for Kent County Council to divest as soon as possible."

The council invests money in the pension fund for a range of other organisations as well, with other local councils as well as schools across the county seeing their cash distributed through the fund.

It isn't the first time the council's pension fund decisions have been put under the spotlight, though.

The council's public health expert Marian Gibbon resigned last year in protest due to KCC's pension pot investing in tobacco companies (see box).

Cllr Simmonds said that, like tobacco, the council had to get a return for people who would rely on it.

He told KoS: "My priority will always be to get a strong income stream. The whole principle of a pension fund is to ensure the capital value of the fund is sustained, while making payments to those who rely on it to live. I never heard a word of protest from members of the pension fund about investing in tobacco, and I doubt I'll hear one about this."

One woman who isn't happy about the investment is Fran Long.

Ms Long – a member of the Friends of the Earth in Tonbridge and Malling – has started an online petition calling on KCC to rethink its investment approach.

She said: "Most fund members and taxpayers won't be happy to learn that their money is funding climate change. As local residents we are calling on the council to stand on the right side of history and give up investing in fossil fuels.

"The council should reinvest this money into building new homes, clean renewable energy or public transport."

It's not a view which Cllr Simmonds agrees with, pointing to the fact that when most people drive to work, or put the heating on, most are making use of fossil fuels.

He said: "If every pressure group had its way, there'd be nothing left to invest in. Investments in oil and gas often pay good dividends, and tend to grow at a steady rate, so it has been good for the pension fund to allocate cash to them for our members.

"If we weren't able to keep growing the fund, there would be serious problems, and in fact, if KCC couldn't afford to fund payments, it would be the taxpayer that had to pick up the tab. It's our responsibility to ensure it keeps growing, so I'm unapologetic about investing in this sector."

■ **Do you agree with the pension fund being invested in some industries? Share your views and join the debate. Write to: The Editor, KoS, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford TN23 1PP. Or email us at editorial@kosmedia.co.uk.**

We'll print the best views on our letters page next week.

A SMOKING GUN



FUSS: KCC is no stranger to negative news over its pension funds after the row in 2011 over tobacco company investments

BACK in 2011, Kent County Council found itself on the receiving end of a barrage of criticism after it was revealed its pension fund ploughed some £24million into four tobacco firms.

Headlines were swiftly generated courtesy of the council supporting and financing a number of stop smoking initiatives.

The charity Action on Smoking and Health blasted KCC, saying it was "totally unacceptable".

A spokesman said at the time: "We are aware of many councils and even NHS trusts that have invested in tobacco companies, one or two, but to have four such large investments is quite extraordinary."

The council was forced to re-evaluate the investment which included millions put into Philip Morris, Imperial Tobacco, Altria Group and Japan Tobacco.

In total, investment amounted to one per cent of all its investments.

Like most pension funds, the council uses external investment managers to make investments in stocks and shares – with a view to them returning a profit over a long term investment.

The county council has a legal obligation to obtain the best possible return on its investment of the pension fund.

Employee and employer contributions are received each month and are used to pay pensions and expenses of the fund. Each month any surplus is invested in order to increase the value of the fund. A superannuation fund committee monitors the performance of the fund's investments with valuations of the fund completed every three years.

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GATHERING: The event was hosted at the Reynolds Retreat in Sevenoaks

Prancing horse owners boost Surtees' charity

Ferrari Owners' Club event in Sevenoaks is joined by motor racing legend John Surtees to raise funds for foundation named after his son

MILLIONS of pounds worth of exotic supercars from Ferrari caused a stir when they roared into Sevenoaks last weekend.

The cars were taking part in a Ferrari Owners' Club – an organisation set up for fans of the prancing horse supercar marque– event being held at the Reynolds Retreat Country Club just outside the town.

The massive collection of cars – both modern and vintage – were joined by Formula 1 champion John Surtees. He's a man who knows a thing or two about the Italian maker, having joined Scuderia Ferrari – the carmaker's racing team – in 1963 before going on to take the F1 world championship just a year later.

Mr Surtees, who also won world titles on two-wheels – and remains unique in doing the double – also gave guests a chance to try their hand at karting using a special simulator which replicates Chatham track Buckmore Park; famous for being the proving ground for current F1 stars Lewis Hamilton and Jenson Button during their early years of racing.

The charity event was held in aid of the Henry Surtees Foundation, which received a cheque at the end of the day from those who had taken part. The Reynolds Retreat venue also donated £1,000 to the charity.

Henry Surtees was killed in 2009, aged just 18, after a freak accident at Brands Hatch as he raced in a Formula 2 event.

His grief-stricken father, John, set up the charity to help, among other things, those suffering brain or physical injury following an accident.

Kieran Street, sales director at the Reynolds Retreat, said: "We helped raise a fantastic £2,435 for the Henry Surtees Foundation. John Surtees entertained visitors with a discussion about his racing career and signed autographs. We'd like to thank all the car owners who provided their Ferraris."





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LEGENDARY: The trumpeter will be touring the UK.

Trumpeter Leroy Jones to perform in Tunbridge Wells

Molly Kersey speaks to the performer about his upcoming Kent tour date...

LEGENDARY trumpeter Leroy Jones will be bringing a taste of New Orleans jazz to Tunbridge Wells as part of his tour of the UK.

The founder of the Leroy Jones Quintet, whose hits include Sweeter Than a Summer Breeze, Sleepy Time Down South, When My Dreamboat Comes Home and Dinah, is a member of the New Orleans Jazz Hall of Fame.

He has performed in every city in America and he also regularly appears on TV shows including Oprah Winfrey and Late Night with David Letterman.

And the musician is looking forward to setting off on his first major solo tour of the UK.

"I am quite excited, very much so in view of getting to pair up with some great local musicians," he told KoS.

"Joe Stilgoe and Ian Shaw will be special guests on the tour, and I have got a fine rhythm section that will be joining me."

Mr Shaw has been frequently praised for his abilities as a jazz vocalist, and Mr Stilgoe is an internationally celebrated singer, pianist and songwriter.

"My wife will be accompanying me on the trombone," Mr Jones said.

"I am really looking forward to it because I haven't been to the UK to tour round there in this manner since 1994.

"That time I was with my Quintet, we performed all over England and Scotland and Ireland, playing all the big venues."

So what exactly can jazz fans expect from the shows?

"We will be playing a mixture of jazz standards, a lot of traditional New Orleans jazz and some original compositions of mine," Mr Jones explained.

He first discovered his love for music at a very young age.

He quickly became the leader of the seminal Fairview band – a brass band whose alumni includes a number of well-know musicians in New Orleans.

It was formed by jazz guitarist and banjoist Danny Barker.

"I got into music in a school band when I was 10 years old and by the time I was 12 years old I had my first professional gig," explained Mr Jones.

"I started with traditional New Orleans music and a brass band.

"That vocation was inspired by a man by the name of Danny Barker.

"He was a New Orlenian, born and raised, and he was known best for playing with the Cab Calloway band back in the 1930s, and playing guitar with people like Dizzy Gillespie and Billie Holiday.

"He was a member of the church just up the road from my parent's house, a baptist church named Fairview," he added.

"The pastor of the church asked him to organise some young people to be part of a brass band and that band was established in 1970, which is when I did my first professional gig at the Lousiana jazz and heritage festival."

Leroy Jones will be performing at the Assembly Hall Theatre, Tunbridge Wells, on November 5.

The show will be starting at 8pm and tickets are available now.

For more information, or to book tickets, to the show you can call the box office on 01892 530613.

Alternatively you can visit www.assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk.

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Women Seeking

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PAT, 68, young at heart, slim, proud 4' 11" GSOH, N/S, likes walking etc Whistable area, seeks similar slim easy going male 60-70. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419081**

AMANDA, 36, tall, slim, busty brunette seeks man, any age, any area, for discreet daytime fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 4292 Box 418117**

CHANTELLE, 5ft3 light brown/blonde hair, blue eyes, like nights in/out, walks, animals, romance seeks honest guy. Littlehampton. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4923883**

DISCREET man wanted by married lady for no strings fun. I'm called Sarah and am 37yrs. Pls call, ACA **Tel No: 0906 515 4299 Box 418167**

MARIE, very lonely middle-aged woman, looking for a kind hearted older man, late 70s/early 80s for friendship/companionship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418955**

ANNA, busty mature lady seeks no strings discreet meetings with male any age or location. **Tel No: 0906 515 4295 Box 366019**

RACHEL late 40s, blonde, blue eyes and very voluptuous. Looking for a kind, caring honest man. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418741**

MAUREEN, discreet sensual lady, 42yrs seeks daytime fun at her home. ACA. **Tel: 0906 515 4275 Box: 405297**

ESSEX lady, mid 60's, adaptable, seeking nice male, likes most things. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418537**

LAUREN, 32yrs, recently divorced, own home and 2 kids seeks single dads or older chap. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4127590**

HELEN, widow 58, medium build, 5ft 4ins, blonde, GSOH, likes a chat, days out, looking to start again with someone of similar age. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 376243**

KAREN, 51yrs, never been married and does not want to be! Just wants a nice kind hearted chap for dates, texts etc. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4032409**

FEMALE, 59, GSOH, many interests, seeks caring male for fun friendship maybe more, genuine calls only. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4819793**

GORGEOUS flower, Ashford Kent, 51, larger lady, large personality, easy going, seeks male who likes dogs, animals for relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417435**

FEMALE easy going, kind, loving, genuine, romantic, car boots, gardening, seeking male with GSOH. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417603**

SUSIE fit, friendly, looking for someone to love and look after me, preferably, older, N/S male with own car. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 392537**

HAPPY young looking lady, 62, likes socialising, conversation, seeking nice man to share good times with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407383**

KATIE, 5ft 5, slim dark hair, very attractive female, likes most things in life and a good laugh, looking for a similar male. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4722127**

NICE female looking for decent genuine male for friendship to start out with. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4710874**

BLONDE female, 5ft 1ins, size 12, likes meals out, drinks, nights in, walks, seeks male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409025**

JAN 63, young at heart, petite, 5ft 2ins, brown hair, blue eyes, GSOH, likes cooking, countryside, travel, days out, seeks easy going male, 60-70. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416349**

ATTRACTIVE lady early 50's, petite, Scandinavian blonde professional, WLTM professional, caring gent, 50-60's for attention and future together. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416569**

RACHEL attractive, blue eyes, blonde, voluptuous, seeking kind, honest, generous kind male. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418403**

JAN 63, young at heart, petite, 5ft 2ins, brown hair, blue eyes, GSOH, likes cooking, countryside, travel, days out, seeks easy going male, 60-70. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416349**

ALISON 39, petite with long brown hair, hazel eyes, very loving, seeking similar male for an uncomplicated relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416517**

ALISON 30, pretty, slim with long brown hair, fit and active seeks fit older male for energetic relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416497**

DEBORAH 41, intelligent brunette, lovely brown eyes, discreet, many interests, seeks similar male to share fun and good conversation. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416515**

ATTRACTIVE black, athletic lady, varied interests, seeks similar white, old fashioned, genuine male for relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416215**

MAY sexy black African female, 38, hardworking, seeks generous friendly male for mutual rewarding friendship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416211**

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SUE young at heart, good looking, enjoy life, socialising, beach walks, gardening, theatre, seeking male, 55-65 to share life with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416171**

JACKIE 32, attractive professional, very smart and feminine, long brown hair, seeks smart, confident, older male who knows how to treat a lady. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416297**

BECKY 23, classy blonde, long blonde hair, blue eyes seeks loving older guy to spoil and pamper her. Discretion assured/guaranteed. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416233**

LINDA 26, cheeky, curvy brunette, a little shy at first, likes to look after herself, seeks dark haired male for discreet naughty but fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416195**

TERESA 39, petite, cuddly and bubbly seeks kind older male to travel, have fun, and take care of, pamper and flirt with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416081**

LUCY stunning tall brunette, looking for exciting times, seeks like-minded, adventurous male who is willing to try anything once or maybe even twice! **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416079**

PETITE blonde, blue eyes, very feminine and sensual seeks younger male for friendship and discreet fun. Can accommodate. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416077**

SARAH 29yr old pretty slim single mum of one, interesting, lively, good fun, enjoys nights in/out, music, seeking similar easy going, genuine, honest man/dad to get to know. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415841**

ANGIE attractive nurse 39yrs, new to area/advertising, likes dog walking, being sociable, meals in/out, WLTM honest, fun male for possible ltr. looks unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415827**

LISA attractive petite Filipino female, very lonely, wanting to find love, companionship and to be happy, looking for friendship and more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415549**

SUE 65, 5ft 8ins, blonde hair, fashionable, smoker, GSOH, enjoys meals out, travel, animals, WLTM kind, shyish man for friendship, maybe more. Thanet area. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415735**

INTELLIGENT funny guy without a huge ego required for damaged heart. Casey 39, size 10, curves in all the right paces, pretty, kind, loving, genuine, romantic and available. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415509**

BLACK lady 43, sincere, down to earth, fun loving, likes theatre, cinema, meals out, walks, seeking white gent with GSOH, sincere and down to earth. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415477**

JENNY voluptuous blonde tanned well-presented female, enjoys being and giving pampering, cooking, cosy nights, looking for some broadminded excitement. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415399**

JOYCE 39, attractive GSOH, loves nights out, honest, loyal, fun to be with, looking for mature male for adult companionship, meals out and hopefully more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415561**

Men Seeking

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NICE looking genuine man would like to meet nice lady any age for company, outings with GSOH. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4922399**

ALAN, 49yrs, kind chap with own building business, been broken hearted and seeks kind caring lady, looks unimportant. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4105813**

MALE 56, likes good conversation, seeks older lady for discreet friendly fun, 50 plus. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419201**

MALE 51, 5ft 8ins, N/S, GSOH, easygoing, seeks slim female, 18-45 for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 338269**

ANDREW, 63, likes animals, walking, boot fares, shopping, looking for someone similar living in the Maidstone/Kent area, for possible LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419203**

MALE 56, likes good conversation, seeks older lady for discreet friendly fun, 50 plus. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419201**

MALE 51, 5ft 8ins, N/S, GSOH, easygoing, seeks slim female, 18-45 for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 338269**

RICHARD 59 from East Kent. WLTM genuine female 50 plus for friendship! **Text only to Mailbox No: 4448765**

MALE 56 yrs, GSOH, n/s, would like to meet a lady to have happy times, lots of love to give, to enjoy good times in and out. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4181244**

MALE 57, seeking honest, reliable, genuine lady for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418535**

MIKE from Canterbury 57, medium build, GSOH, varied interests, sign language interpreter, seeks slim female, 21-42 for LTR. Single mum welcome. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 379673**

SINGLE young lady, slim-medium build, 24-38 sought by mature male in Canterbury. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405697**

MIKE Canterbury mature male, seeks single mum/lady, 28-42, slim-medium build for loving, caring relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415275**

MALE, 39, tall, hardworking, 6ft 2, looking for long-term lover/older woman. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418877**

WRITER tall, slim, dark hair, generous, seeking broadminded lady for fun times. Any age/status. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412749**

SUGAR Daddy available! Mature, tall, slim, natural dark hair, seeks lady, age unimportant. Not afraid of commitment. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418889**

SIMON, 50, actor, loves music, films, reading, writing, loopholes, ambiguity, Thailand, Singapore and Indonesia, WLTM a pretty leggy female, 35 years plus for friendship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418827**

MALE 71, Tidy, OHAC WLTM Lady late 60s early70s for easy friendship. Likes animals. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4757205**

50YR old divorced white male, passionate, strong, seeking caring lady for romantic, loving relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418641**

49YR old male, 6ft, well built, seeks female to wine/dine and have fun with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 390929**

48YR old divorced male, 6ft, well built, seeks lady for fun and laughter. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380789**

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BARRY 47, 6ft, well built, seeks female for wining, dining and fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361787**

VINCENT 48, 6ft, well built, seeks lady for fun nights in and out. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 377397**

HAPPY go lucky divorced man, 48, 6ft, well built, seeks gorgeous female to share love and laughs with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 383719**

GARY 48, 6ft, well-built, dark hair, brown eyes, seeks passionate female for fun times in and out. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 387175**

BARRY 49, 6ft, well built, kind, affectionate, loving, seeks special lady for good times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 393855**

MALE 70's, fit, looking for lady to share life with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416663**

HARRY 50, ex soldier, 6ft, well built, seeking lady to wine and dine. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417015**

MALE 57, seeking honest, reliable, genuine lady for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418535**

69YR old male ,professional, 5ft 10ins, fit, medium build, young outlook, reliable, sincere, likes most things, seeks slim, slender, uncomplicated lady. Kent/Surrey. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418531**

RICHARD 63, N/S, cleanshaven, likes meals out, days out, classic cars, seeking female for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418517**

JOHN young 50, tall, slim, hardworking, seeking business/professional female for discreet meetings, can accommodate. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418461**

JONATHAN good looking, considerate, long curly hair, N/S, seeks tall, slim female, 30-45. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418451**

PAUL 49 5ft 8ins likes eating/nights in/out seeks loving female for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 404013**



BRIAN 70, Maidstone, seeking female, 60 plus, likes meals out, cinema, theatre, days out and cosy nights in. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410611**

YOUNG 64yr old male, slim, GSOH, adventurous, outgoing, likes most things, seeks easygoing, laidback, open-minded lady for friendship and good times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 399539**

ASHFORD male, 66, GSOH, easy going, smoker, down to earth, adventurous, seeks like-minded female for friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416845**



55YR old male, 5ft 9ins, slim, likes swimming, pool, seeking female for fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418265**

COMPANION sought, 50-60's by slim, young looking 65yr old man for cinema, music, eating, drinking, talking and laughter. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418257**

JOHN nice looking, brown curly hair, gentle, understanding, seeks tall, slim lady for daytime no strings fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418207**

BRIAN happy go lucky, genuine, loving, likes nights in, DVDs, meals out, seeking genuine lady for loving, caring relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418197**

MALE widower, N/S, likes reading, walking, WLTM lady 50-70 for friendship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418173**

COME dine with me. Attractive black British male 50 yrs, 6ft, medium building, working, GSOH, romantic and genuine WLTM similar female. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4763687**

PETE 49, slim, 5ft 7in s, smoker, creative, likes art, live bands, outdoors, seeks similar female for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416421**

PAUL 52, seeks loving female for exciting times, meals out, weekends away, cosy nights in. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418077**

MALE widower, N/S, seeks buxom lady, 50-70, likes reading, 60's music, pub quizzes and crosswords. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417905**

BRIAN 71, likes meals out, drinks, nights in, music, walks, seeks female with similar interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417697**

Gay Seeking

REMEMBER: Calls cost £1.55 per minute plus your phone company's access charge. Texts cost £1.50 per message received.

BI male 57 slim GSOH seeks local guy for fun and friendship. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4751943**

JESSICA, 53 yrs old, feminine, sexy, smooth body seeking gay or bi man for fun, must be non-smoker. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418207**

FEMININE, sexy, cross-dresser, non-smoker, seeking cross-dresser gay or bi guy for fun. Must be non-smoker. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4866072**

JESSICA, 53 yrs old, feminine, sexy, smooth body seeking gay or bi man for fun, must be non-smoker. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418713**

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Variety of new productions will be making way to Canterbury

by Molly Kersey

molly.kersey@archant.co.uk



SUPERNATURAL: He Had Hairy Hands will be performed in Canterbury. Credit: Richard Davenport.

A VARIETY of productions will be making their way to the Marlowe Studio, Canterbury, next month.

Multi award-winning comedian Simon Munnery will be beginning the programme of events with his new show Everything and Nothing, which will be performed on October 3.

The comedian's stand-up career has spanned 29 years and seen him regularly perform around the world and star in a number of TV and radio projects – including Radio 1's League Against Tedium and Radio 4's Where Did It All Go Wrong?

On October 8, touching new play One Last Waltz will be performed at the venue.

The show, which is based on real life events and experiences, explores the difficulties of living with dementia.

It tells the story of Alice, who is gradually becoming more and more forgetful.

Her daughter Mandy is always on hand to help her, but the strain is beginning to take its toll.

Then, a long forgotten photograph stirs up some old memories and lures Alice back to the Crown Hotel in Blackpool.

Hoping to get a final chance to dance in the tower ballroom, the mother and daughter set off there together. But Blackpool is not how Alice remembers it, and things start to become far too much for her when she finds herself getting lost in the past.

The production is presented by the Black Coffee Theatre, and it will be followed by a free post-show Q&A session.

Award-winning comedy troupe Kill The Beast will be performing their show He Had Hairy Hands on October 24.

The 1970s detective werewolf mystery features mystery, supernatural slaughter, projections and original music.

Set in a sleepy town in Hemlock-Under-Lye in 1974, werewolf attacks suddenly begin threatening everyday life.

For performance times, or to book tickets to the Marlowe Studio shows, call the box office on 01227 787787.

Alternatively you can visit www.marlowetheatre.com for more information,

Folk band due in Maidstone



FOLK band Leveret will be performing at The Bowerhouse, Maidstone, on October 7.

The show is part of their UK tour and will start at 7.30pm.

To book, visit www.thebowerhouse.info.

Tim Vine on stand-up tour

COMEDIAN Tim Vine will be embarking on his first stand-up tour in four years, and will be performing at the Central Theatre, Chatham, on October 8.

Tickets are £22 and the show starts at 8pm.

For more information, or to book, you can visit tickets.medway.gov.uk.

Stars preparing for panto



PANTOMIME Cinderella will be performed at the Assembly Hall Theatre, Tunbridge Wells, from December 11 to January 3 2016.

To book, call the box office on 01892 530613.

The Shires take to stage

THE Shires will be performing at the Leas Cliff Hall, Folkestone, on October 7 at 8pm.

The musical duo consists of Crissie Rhodes and Ben Earle.

For more information, or to book tickets to the show, you can visit www.atgtickets.com/folkestone.



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The Drifters due in county



LEGENDARY band The Drifters will be performing at the Assembly Hall Theatre, Tunbridge Wells, on October 18 at 7.30pm.

To book, visit www.assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk.

Peppa Pig is live on stage

CHILDREN'S stage show Peppa Pig's Surprise will be performed at the Orchard Theatre, Dartford, from October 23 to 25.

The live show features new songs and life-size puppets.

For more information, or to book, visit www.orchardtheatre.co.uk.

Overtones in Margate



THE Overtones will be making their way to the Margate Winter Gardens as part of their tour – Christmas Party With The Overtones – on December 18.

To book, call the box office on 01843 292795.

Book of Whitstable author

WRITER Julie Wassmer has released her new book, Murder-On-Sea – A Whitstable Pearl Mystery.

The book is the second in the Pearl Nolan trilogy - and it features a Christmas twist.

The book is £19.99 and is published by Constable. It is also available as an eBook.

Stage show brings the hits of musical legends

By Molly Kersey
molly.kersey@archant.co.uk



HIT stage show Soul Legends will be making its way to Dartford.

The show features more than 30 songs, including the hits of a number of iconic performers including Aretha Franklin, James Brown, Tina Turner, Michael Jackson and Barry White.

The music will be spanning the sixties to the present day – featuring songs such as Respect, Knock On Wood, Ain't No Stopping Us Now, Best Of My Love and Beat It.

Spokesman for the show Gary Mac said: "The show is the brainchild of Michael Taylor.

"He produces a show called the Magic of Motown which is reasonably well-known locally.

"There were lots of songs we couldn't put in that show, from the same era, that we really wanted to include. They are all great songs that people like to hear but we couldn't do it. So we thought – let's produce a show that we can do that way. It's been a natural progression."

And he said that the show had been a real success.

"It's taken on a life of its own.

"The audience is kind of split into two halves – people who remember a song from the sixties or people who remember songs from the seventies and eighties.

"You can see people giving each other knowing looks and going 'oh yeah, I remember this'.

"It's a very uplifting show. If you went to a party or wedding or something like that, these are the songs that get everyone up on the dancefloor."

The show will feature a live band, choreography and 16 costume changes.

"The cast have to be able to sing and dance - and do it at the same time," added Mr Mac. "You get a cast of six main singers at the front and overall up there you have about 15 people involved."

Soul Legends will be at the Orchard Theatre on October 10 at 7.30pm. Tickets are £27.50 or £23.50 with concessions.

Visit www.orchardtheatre.co.uk



UPLIFTING: The show features a live band. Credit: Paul Boyling.



ICONIC: Hits of Aretha Franklin and James Brown will be included

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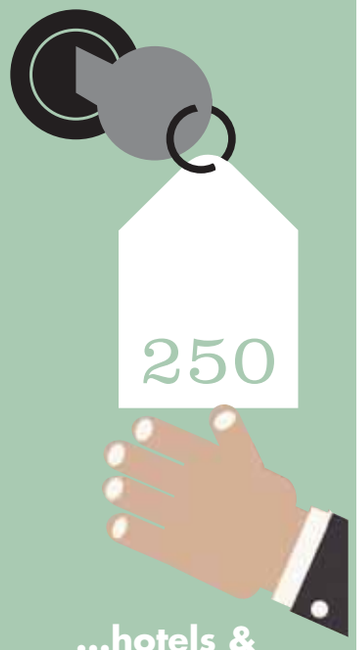
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Ottolenghi and Scully have a dream partnership

The pair will be releasing their new restaurant cook book to share all their favourites tips and recipes

"I ALWAYS get obsessed with things," says head chef Ramael Scully, explaining how he recently spent £100 on eBay buying 1.5kg of the rare spice, Grains of Paradise.

"It's like drugs!" shouts his friend, collaborator and boss, Yotam Ottolenghi – but then, if you're as consumed by food and flavour as these two, addiction is inevitable.

What makes Ottolenghi food – which you'll know if you've ever eaten at an Ottolenghi restaurant, bought an Ottolenghi cookbook or read an Ottolenghi recipe in the Israeli chef's Guardian column – is the sheer number of ingredients involved.

"Haha, we're not Italian cooks. It's not like four great ingredients put on a plate," says the 46-year-old restaurateur with a laugh.

"Of course, a fresh tomato with olive oil is a great thing, but that's definitely not the way I grew up – otherwise it wouldn't be Ottolenghi."

He explains it wouldn't be NOPI or Scully food either – and this is the pair's current project, a restaurant standard cookbook based on the food served at NOPI, Ottolenghi's renowned eatery in London's Soho.

But this is a restaurant book with a twist, do not expect a coffee table slab, to be looked at and not touched. It should be daubed with spice and oil.

"I thought it was going to be a very chef-y cook book, so I was really excited," says Mr Scully wryly.

"Then Yotam was like, 'No, Scully, we're doing the restaurant food we do here for home cooks'. I thought, 'Yeah, it'll be a walk in the park' – it was the hardest thing I ever did!"



FOOD: A large number of ingredients are involved in the dishes.

Jerusalem-born Mr Ottolenghi first met Mr Scully, who grew up in Australia but has Chinese, Indian, Malay and Irish blood, in 2005, hiring him as chef de partie.

"It's not a typical story where someone grows under someone else's roof," explains Mr Ottolenghi. "Scully came in with his own style already. Obviously, it's evolved and changed over the years, but I haven't taught him how to cook. It's a partnership."

"Yotam is a man of words," says Mr Scully. "I had all these ideas and crazy things on the plate and Yotam's like, 'No, no, no, too much Scully, calm down'. But he knew I always had the flavour part, I just couldn't control it on the plate. And that built between us all these years. Sometimes, now, I tell him he's got too much on the plate!"

This was the trickiest aspect of putting together the NOPI cookbook: lopping off at least some of the ingredients Scully would ordinarily use in the restaurant kitchen.

Top picks include the twice-cooked chicken, the Urid Dhal cod ("A very satisfying dish for entertaining," promises Mr Ottolenghi) and the vine leaf pie (a "piece of heaven", apparently), and they can't help spiralling into off-the-cuff cooking tips ("If you're making tzatziki – put burnt butter in it," encourages Mr Scully).

Hot Chip at Dreamland

HOT Chip will be the second act to play at the inaugural By The Sea festival, taking place at Dreamland Pleasure Park, Margate.

They will perform on Friday, November 13, and Foals will headline the following day.

Dreamland members can get tickets 24 hours before everyone else by visiting the information desk at the park.

Tickets are £28.50 and are on sale now.

Up close with an opera

OLIVIER award-winning company OperaUpClose will be bringing The Barber of Seville to the Hazlitt Theatre, Maidstone, on Thursday (October 1).

The production tells the story of Doctor Bartleby, who has designs on his ward Rosina, but she is more interested in the attentions of a handsome stranger.

Tickets for the show are £21.50. To book, call the box office on 01622 758611.

Juggling and clowning

CIRCUS show Pss Pss will be performed at the Folkestone Quarterhouse on October 10.

The show features two skilled performers and will include a blend of juggling, acrobatics and clowning.

The show is suitable for children aged eight and over and it will be starting at 7.30pm.

To book, visit www.quarterhouse.co.uk.

Gino D'Acampo to visit

CHEF, TV personality and author Gino D'Acampo will be touring the UK with a live stage show - which will involve him speaking about his love of Italy and showing audiences how to cook some of his favourite recipes.

He will be at the Margate Winter Gardens on November 8.

For more details or to book visit www.margatewintergardens.co.uk.

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Genoa is rich in atmosphere

TRAVEL REVIEW: Genoa

by Gabrielle Fagan







BEAUTIFUL: Charles Dickens spent a year living in Genoa.

I'M lost in Genoa, wandering through an intriguing labyrinth of ancient cobblestone alleyways so narrow no sunlight can penetrate.

Adding to my happy confusion is the feeling that I've stepped back in time and, in a way, I have.

These lanes, known as the caruggi, claim to be the birthplace of Christopher Columbus – the city's most famous son, and are part of Europe's largest medieval town.

This UNESCO world heritage site, tucked behind a bustling modern port, is redolent with history and atmosphere, and just one of the gems in a fascinating destination all too often overlooked in favour of Italy's big hitters, Rome, Florence and Venice.

Autumn's an ideal time to visit because cruise crowds have, in the main, evaporated and it's possible to relax and really appreciate a place Charles Dickens, who spent a year living here, aptly described as a "beautiful confusion" with so much crammed into a thin snaking 30km strip of land, squashed between hills and the Mediterranean Sea.

One of the shopkeepers in the old town, who comes to my rescue with directions, sums up the essence of this capital of the beautiful Liguria region.

"Getting lost in Genoa is easy but is surely one of the city's pleasures, because you never know what you'll find; there are surprises around every corner," says Alessandro Boccardo, the smiling owner of a chocolate shop founded in 1866, which still has the original 19th century machines used to toast cocoa beans.

His store, Romeo Viganotti, on Vico dei Castagna, is just one of 36 artisan shops housed in centuries-old buildings, some still boasting pillars, statues and frescoes from grander days. Here, traditional practices, including tripe making, have been carried on for generations.

While the Centro Storico district is charming, it's impossible not to be impressed by the spectacular Rolli Palaces on the Via Garibaldi, dubbed 'the street of kings' – each one more lavish than the last.

Three virtually combine to become one huge museum and have stunning frescoes and artworks by artists such as Caravaggio, Rubens, Titian, van Dyck, Gauguin and Veronese.

An exhibition, From The Impressionists To Picasso, is the main draw at the Palazzo Ducale from September 25 to April 10, and will feature works by Monet, Degas and van Gogh.

Another treasure is the magnificent Cathedral of San Lorenzo, which contains the ashes of St John the Baptist. Its striking exterior of black and white marble is characteristic of so many buildings throughout the city.

I touch a tiny dog carved into its marble pillars, which is supposed to bring luck.

Lack of space made the Genoese resourceful.

To give an impression of majesty and status, they skilfully employed trompe l'oeil painting techniques, and fascias of many buildings are embellished with 'faux' marble pillars, porticos and arches, giving them an elegant theatrical character.

Despite a reverence for the past, this is still very much an authentic working city, where port workers mingle with bankers and tourists.

To get my bearings, I take a bird's-eye view. The city was built in steep tiers like a wedding cake, but I avoid an exhausting climb by using the Art Nouveau lift at Piazza del Portello, up to Spianata Castelletto.

I enjoy a vista stretching from the mountains to the Mediterranean.

Eating and drinking is a serious pastime and I learn one key Genoese phrase 'mescite' (hurry up and pour) as I visit a few of Genoa's cosmopolitan wine bars.

One ingredient is also ubiquitous on the restaurant menus - pesto, which originated in the area.

Roberto Panizza, who helps organise the annual Genoa Pesto World Championship, gives me a lesson in making it and sums up his birthplace.

"While the port's still the soul of Genoa, this is a multi-faceted city which has so many layers.

"It takes time to understand it but it's worth it," he says.

And I couldn't agree more.

TRAVEL FACTS

Gabrielle Fagan was a guest of the Genoa tourist board.

For more information about Genoa you can visit www.visitgenoa.it/en/ and www.turismoinliguria.it/en/

Return flights from Gatwick to Genoa start from £81 return with British Airways.

For more information about the flights that are available you can visit www.britishairways.com.

Reviews by Damon Smith



MISS YOU ALREADY
(12A, 112 mins) Drama/Comedy/Romance

THERE are tears aplenty in Catherine Hardwicke's film, predominantly shed by lead actresses Toni Collette and Drew Barrymore as they face a cruel disease that affects one in eight women in the UK.

Collette and Barrymore play best friends Milly and Jess, who met at school and have shared pivotal coming-of-age moments. Now 30-something and fabulous in radically different ways, the pals are braced for middle age.

Milly is a PR executive with a handsome husband and two cherubic offspring. Bohemian earth mother Jess lives on a house boat with her oil rigger husband and cluckily prepares for the arrival of their first child.

Out of the blue, Milly is diagnosed with cancer and has to confront her mortality without her designer high heels. As usual, Jess is by her side every painful step of the way, including a double mastectomy that forces Milly to question her femininity.

LIFE
(15, 111 mins) Drama/Romance

IN 1955 Los Angeles, photographer Dennis Stock struggles to fulfil work commitments and his responsibilities to a young son, Rodney. At a party, Stock encounters an awkward 24-year-old called James Dean propping up the bar.

The photographer is transfixed and spots a raw talent that could turn Dean into a global star.

He proposes a photo essay in Life magazine but the actor is reluctant.

Stock persists, capturing one of the most famous shots of the leading man: Dean hunkering down with a cigarette as he walks through a rain-sodden Times Square. The snapper joins Dean on a trip back home to Indiana for some quality time with his uncle, aunt and young cousin Marcus.

Back in Hollywood, Jack Warner makes clear to Dean that he will need to scratch the backs of studio executives to land his dream role in Rebel Without A Cause.



CAPTIVE
(12A, 97 mins) Thriller

CRIMINAL Brian Nichols breaks out of a courthouse jail and kills four people including a judge and a court reporter. He goes on the run, armed with a police radio.

Nichols steals vehicles at gunpoint, but finds himself trapped in the city with roadblocks cutting off all available escape routes.

He seeks refuge in the home of waitress Ashley Smith, a recovering drug addict, who could lose custody of her daughter if she can't overcome cravings for crystal meth. Trapped in her apartment with Nichols, Smith strikes up an awkward repartee with her emotionally unstable captor, who has a $65,000 bounty on his head.

By Hannah Stephenson
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk



CONIFER: A coniferous forest.

Gardens counting on conifers

GARDENERS who love a riot of colour throughout the seasons may dismiss conifers as dull, boring specimens which add little to the glory of the garden.

Indeed, some of us will only really come into contact with a conifer in the form of a miniature type which we use to gain height in our summer or winter containers, surrounded by much more colourful bedding or shrubs to fill the pot.

Yet the conifer has a much wider use than the fill-in specimen in containers. It is invaluable in beds and borders, providing structure, texture and colour when everything else has died down and looks stunning in winter when its foliage is whitened with frost or dusted with snow.

Conifers can work as a backdrop, standalone, or in a border with other plants, from making effective screening to creating the perfect background for flower borders or accents in rock gardens. They are extremely versatile, coming in an amazingly diverse range of shades, textures, shapes and sizes, says the Horticultural Trades Association, which has named the conifer its plant of the month for October.

Retailers will be creating inspiring displays of conifers during National Conifer Week, which began on Saturday (September 26), until October 3.

It is organised by the British Conifer Group, to encourage gardeners to make the most of these unsung year-round garden heroes.

They are low-maintenance, suit contemporary and traditional settings and provide all-year-round interest.

They come into their own in the winter and early spring, when they are unchallenged by the green of deciduous shrubs and perennials, and come in shades of green, gold and brown. Of course, the size of your garden will determine your choice of conifer. Generally, most conifers look best planted where their individual shape and colour can be enjoyed without competition from other show-stopping plants.

Some good plant partners include heathers, grasses, phormiums and dwarf hebes.

In formal settings, they can boast stunning architectural value - common box can easily be trimmed into balls and cones, Laurus nobilis looks great used as a standard, while Taxus baccata is perfect for topiary.

Buxus sempervirens is often used to create hedges around formal beds.

Some conifers that are columnar in shape are really useful in narrow spaces, creating an evergreen feature which rises out of lower planting.

The dark green Irish yew, Taxus baccata 'Fastigiata', is perfect for creating an exclamation mark in planting because of its slender nature, rising out of ground cover such as ivy or periwinkle.

Red fruits stud the plant in the latter part of the year, while the column becomes broader with age.





PARTY: The purpose-built location is fully themed

Party the night away in themed venue

COME and enjoy a traditional Christmas extravaganza with your friends and colleagues this festive season.

Party the night away in a fully-themed, purpose-built venue in a convenient location just off the A2 near Canterbury.

There will be welcome drinks and canapés for your party on arrival. This is followed by a delicious four-course traditional Christmas dinner.

Entertainment includes the Monster Christmas Ball nightclub, cabaret and fun casino.

The Christmas ball is brought to you by UKMB Limited, one of the leading event production and event bar providers in the South East. Established in 2010, the Monster Christmas Ball is fast becoming one of the most popular Christmas party venues in east Kent, providing both shared and exclusive party nights for both corporate and individual guests.

Featuring live entertainment, sumptuous dining and a great atmosphere – it is the place to party this Christmas.

So for something new and exciting this Christmas, come celebrate with them and have a night to remember.

Tickets are available for parties of any size.

The event is now in its sixth year.

This year the event will be taking place on December 11, 12, 18 and 19.

Celebrate festive season in style this year

COME and celebrate the festive season in style at Prince's Golf Club, Sandwich.

They will be hosting Christmas parties in their lodge and clubhouse, offering a wonderful three-course menu, followed by a disco.

Bring your group to join other groups on the night and party until midnight.

However, if your group is larger, please request exclusive use of the venue.

Menu highlights include the crab and prawn tian served with avocado, crème fraiche and cracked black pepper.

Party-goers can opt for a traditional turkey main course or a roast sirloin of beef.

There is obviously a Christmas pudding on the dessert menu but their own favourite dessert – chocolate delice – will also be on the menu too.

Prince's Golf Club will be able to offer other festive dining celebrations ideas – perhaps your business would prefer to get together at lunchtime?

Their two AA rosette brasserie on the bay is open each day in December for festive lunches from £15.50 per person, and they are more than happy to welcome groups from ranging from two to 50 people.

Perhaps you would prefer something really special? The Links Suite at the Lodge is a stylish private dining room, which is perfect for groups of up to 22 people.

The head chef has compiled a wonderful festive menu with a twist.

Prices range from £50 per person. with food available at lunch or dinner.

As well as these Christmas parties, they still have some places available for their New Year's Eve celebrations.

For more details about everything that Prince's Golf Club has to offer this festive season, or to book, you can call Ali McGuirk on 01304 611118.

Alternatively you can email Ms McGuirk on a.mcguirk@princesgolfclub.co.uk or visit their website at www.princesgolfclub.co.uk for further information about what is on offer.



WONDERFUL: A three-course meal and disco will be on offer

PARTY IN STYLE AT THE

Monster Christmas Ball

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Subject to availability, not including 31/12/15

Christmas party venues



PERFECT: The tree-lined venue offers an ideal backdrop for your festive event

The Victorian venue with modern twist

CELEBRATE in style this festive season, with all that glitters at Oakwood House Hotel, situated in Maidstone.

Set in tree-lined gardens, this traditional Victorian venue with a modern twist that offers the perfect backdrop for your festive event.

From locally-sourced seasonal lunches and their sumptuous Christmas Day carvery, to adult and children's parties that pull out all the stops, there is something for everyone at Oakwood House this festive season.

Why not gather family and friends and book one of their more intimate rooms for a relaxing afternoon lunch, buffet or dinner?

If you want something a little different, then why not try one of their Christmas comedy nights?

They have two first-class acts straight from the London comedy circuit, who will perform their routines while you enjoy a fantastic two course meal followed by a DJ playing all of your favourite party tunes.

Shared party nights are available at Oakwood House throughout December.

You are welcome to bring your friends, colleagues or family along to join them, where all the staff at Oakwood House will ensure that you have a fantastic evening.

For more information about all of the events that are on offer at the hotel you can call 01622 620 720.

Themed party nights at Quarterhouse

ARE you looking to celebrate Christmas with your colleagues and friends away from the traditional and formal three-course sit down Christmas meal and disco?

Then take a look at the four themed party nights that the Folkestone Quarterhouse has put together for you.

Their Christmas Party nights are professionally delivered in their fantastic auditorium and bar, with music and dazzling lighting provided by entertainment specialists Apollo Funk.

Not only that, celebrated Folkestone-based restaurant Follies will be providing a variety of delicious meals that are captivating to both the eye and the palate.

They will be taking place over two weekends in December.

You can sing and dance to the music that shaped a generation with their eighties and nineties night, which will be taking place on Friday, December 4.

Be taken on a journey through rock 'n' roll history with their sixties and seventies night, which will be taking place the following evening on Saturday, December 5.

You can party from the noughties through to the present day on Friday, December 11, and shake off the winter blues at the Folkestone Quarterhouse's Caribbean club party on Saturday, December 12.

The venue is ideal for both large or small groups, and their Christmas party nights are designed to please.

So come along and join them, let your hair down, and get the festivities started.

Early bird tickets are available and they are priced at £15 per person.

They will remain available up until October 31, after which they will be priced at £18 per person.

For more details about the events which are on offer this festive season, you can visit their website at www.quarterhouse.co.uk.

Alternatively you can call the box office for further information or to book tickets, on 01303 760750.



UNIQUE: The Quarterhouse will offer an alternative to traditional celebrations

Christmas & New Year 2016
Oakwood House



Celebrate Christmas in style this year at Oakwood House....

A selection of shared and private parties available

If you wish to host a private event this festive season we have a number of dates available for you to party the night away. Book the room with private bar and the DJ along with our delicious 3 course Christmas meal

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www.facebook.com/OakwoodHouseOfficial @hotelmaidstone@genuinehotels

Folkestone Quarterhouse

Christmas Party Offer 2015

Are you looking to celebrate Christmas with your colleagues and friends away from the traditional and formal 3 course sit down Christmas meal and disco?

Then take a look at the four themed party nights Quarterhouse has put together for you!

Early Bird Ticket Price:
£15 per person until 31 October 2015
After that £18 per person

Available at:
Quarterhouse Box Office 01303 760 750
and at www.quarterhouse.co.uk
Quarterhouse, Mill Bay Folkestone CT20 1BN

80'S & 90'S DISCO PARTY NIGHT
Friday 4 December
7pm - 12.30am
Fork Food by Follies, 7pm – 8.30pm
Boeuf Bourguignon with pilaff rice
or
Mushroom Chasseur with pilaff rice (v)
Apollo Funk Entertainment DJ, 8pm – 12pm
Sing and dance to the music that shaped a whole generation, nostalgia guaranteed!
Dressing up for the era optional –
Prize for Best Dressed on the night!
Full Cash Bar open throughout the evening!

60'S & 70'S RETRO PARTY NIGHT
Saturday 5 December
7pm - 12.30am
Fork Food by Follies, 7pm – 8.30pm
Hawaiian pineapple chicken
or
Mushroom, spinach pilau with fried onions (v)
Apollo Funk Entertainment DJ, 8pm – 12pm
Let's take you on journey from Rock N Roll to Motown with music and dance from these extraordinary decades.
Dressing up for the era optional –
Prize for Best Dressed on the night!
Full Cash Bar open throughout the evening!

NOUGHTIES TO NOW PARTY NIGHT
Friday 11 December
7pm - 12.30am
Fork Food by Follies, 7pm – 8.30pm
Chicken & apricot tagine served with minted cous cous
or
Aubergine & sweet potato tagine served with minted cous cous (v)
Apollo Funk Entertainment DJ, 8pm – 12pm
Current, fresh, music from the Millennium to Now!
Dress code, Go Glam!
Prize for Best Dancer on the night!
Full Cash Bar open throughout the evening!

CARIBBEAN CLUB PARTY NIGHT
Saturday 12 December
7pm - 12.30am
Fork Food by Follies, 7pm – 8.30pm
Jamaican jerk chicken wings with rice & peas
or
Sweet potato, Callaloo coconut curry with rice & peas (v)
Apollo Funk Entertainment DJ, 8pm – 12pm
What winter blues? With Soca, Reggae & Salsa bringing the sunshine in to December, we're feeling Hot Hot Hot!
Dressing up optional
Prize for Best Dressed on the night!
Full Cash Bar open throughout the evening!

Creative Foundation
www.quarterhouse.co.uk







Priestfield hosts an extravagant party

ONE of Kent's most prestigious venues will be hosting an extravagant Christmas party schedule set to rival any offering within the county.

Viva Las Priestfield, Gillingham, will welcome thousands of guests throughout December and January to celebrate Christmas with family, friends and work colleagues in the most glamorous festive way.

Guests at Priestfield's decadent Great Hall will be transported to Las Vegas with a themed extravaganza planned to wow and entertain guests.

Gillingham Football Club's director of events and facilities, Steve Ware, believes Viva Las Priestfield could be the biggest and best Christmas the club has hosted.

Guests will be in for an impressive night; enjoying a three-course fine dining experience, all inclusive drinks besides a cabaret show between courses, spectacular light show, close up magic, casino tables, photo booths and much more to surprise guests upon arrival.

They anticipate Viva Las Priestfield to be one of their best events.

For groups looking for a way to celebrate Christmas in style, this night is tailored to suit and for smaller groups as part of a joiner type party, or whole companies wishing to private hire the facilities up to 500 people.

To book, call 01634 350350 or email sales@priestfield.com.





EXTRAVAGANT: There will be casino tables, photo booths and all inclusive drinks for guests



Christmas party venues



DINNER: A Christmas Eve and Christmas Day dinner will be served in the Garden Restaurant.

Reason to celebrate at Bromley Court

JOIN the Bromley Court Hotel this Christmas.

Whether it's for a Christmas party for your company, or festive lunch for the family, they have the options to make it a Christmas to remember. There are many reasons to celebrate in life – birthdays, christenings, wedding anniversaries, graduations.

Bromley Court welcome you to come to the hotel for these special occasions and experience them in their luxurious private dining rooms, bars and banqueting areas, where their events team will take care of the details to make your celebration runs smoothly.

Their range of nine function rooms are suitable for 20 to 180 people with air-conditioning and natural daylight and three sprung dance floors. There is ample, free car parking and guests can make use of the extensive landscaped gardens and south facing terraces.

Everything can be tailored to your individual needs and with almost a century of experience behind them there is no better place to celebrate.

A three-course Christmas Eve dinner will be served in the Garden Restaurant, with carols sung by St Mark's Choir. A Christmas Day lunch will also be served there, with a visit from Santa between midday and 2pm. The cost is £85 for adults, with half portions available for children.

To find out more, you can visit www.bromleycourthotel.co.uk.

Hollywood parties at two Mercure hotels

IT'S the most magical time of the year, so look forward to a seasonal short break, traditional festive fare with all the trimmings, or stylish celebrations with your friends and family in a perfectly unique setting.

Whether you're joining them to celebrate in style or relax and unwind, let two Kent-based Mercure hotels look after every detail this festive period.

At their Hollywood-themed parties, which will be taking place at both Mercure Maidstone and Mercure Tunbridge Wells, you will feel like a star for the night, from the paparazzi on the red carpet to the 'walk of fame'.

Whether with friends, family or colleagues, you'll enjoy a premier evening of delicious food and music from the resident DJ.

Both Hotels offer the perfect setting for a memorable Christmas and New Year

Mercure Tunbridge Wells Hotel, located in a quiet corner of Kent but within easy reach of London, the hotel is styled around a feature oast house.

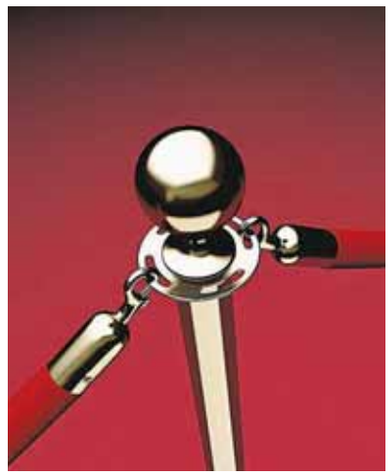
Tunbridge Wells, Hever Castle and the Kent countryside are yours to discover.

Laze in their feel good health club or pop into the beauty studio for some pampering.

Mercure Maidstone Great Danes Hotel is built around a Georgian manor house and set in 26 acres of private gardens.

The hotel was originally part of the Leeds Castle estate.

Today, guests can enjoy the hotel's extensive facilities including brasserie restaurant, bar and feel good health club, which includes an indoor pool and fitness centre.



GLAMOROUS: Hollywood-themed nights will be taking place.

The Hollywood-themed parties will be taking place on Fridays and Saturdays throughout December, from £38 per person.

For more information about what is on offer at Mercure Tunbridge Wells Hotel, you can call them on 0844 8159074.

For further details about the events in Maidstone, you can call 0844 8159045.

Alternatively you can visit them online by going to www.mercure.com.

THE BROMLEY COURT HOTEL

Festive Christmas Dinner Sit down Menu

CREAM OF ROASTED WINTER VEGETABLE SOUP with thyme oil
PRAWN COCKTAIL with avocado and fennel seed salsa verde, and pink grapefruit dressing
PRESSED TERRINE OF CONFIT DUCK AND PISTACHIO with apricot compote





BUTTER -ROASTED NORFOLK TURKEY with traditional trimmings and sherry jus
BAKED FILLET OF HERB-CRUSTED COD with tomato and chive fish cream
ROAST RIB OF SCOTCH BEEF with Yorkshire pudding and red wine jus
WOODLAND MUSHROOM MACARONI with walnut dressed salad and parmesan shavings

HOMEMADE CHRISTMAS PUDDING with brandy sauce
VANILLA CHEESECAKE with mulled wine berry compote
DARK CHOCOLATE AND BAILEYS TORTE with orange and poppy-seed caramel



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CAMERAS! LIGHTS! ITS HOLLYWOOD NIGHTS THIS CHRISTMAS AT MECURE MAIDSTONE and TUNBRIDGE WELLS

These Hollywood-themed parties let you feel like a star for the night, from the paparazzi on the red carpet to the Walk of Fame. Whether with friends family or colleagues, you'll enjoy a premier evening of delicious food and music from the DJ.

Fridays & Saturdays in December 2015. From £38.00 per person

Or,

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SEE PAGE 53

Renegotiation wanted ahead of EU referendum



SEE PAGE 54

Construction Expo in October is 'a must attend' event



BusinessQuarter

Shortage of commercial property good sign for future



Demand for commercial property is at a high, signalling a buoyant economy across the county reports **Jamie Weir**

IF THERE'S one strong indicator for growth prospects in the county, it's commercial property.

The greater the demand for space that can be used for business, the more likely that Kent's economic cycle is at a high, and according to leading figures in the county's development scene, we're currently sitting at a peak of the cycle.

There are problems with that though, as Paul Wookey, CEO of inward investment agency Locate in Kent told KoS.

He said: "We're seeing pressure on the supply side for commercial property, which is a good place to be, and exactly where we want to be in the economic cycle. It's now about how we match the supply of commercial property, with what we'll need to keep that growth going in the future."

According to Mr Wookey that's likely to be key for the county's future prosperity.

There are stumbling blocks though, with funding a problem for many developers eager to build.

Nick Fenton is the chairman of the Kent Developers' Group (KDG), which represents many of the main players in the county's property market.

He said: "The growth agenda is strong across the county in terms of homes and jobs, and the two really have to go hand in hand.

"One of the big problems with that is the commercial property, which helps supply the jobs, struggles to attract the institutional funding to keep it growing at the same pace as housing. We don't want to find the demand cycle out of sync with growth."

TURN TO PAGE 53

mcch tuck by truck

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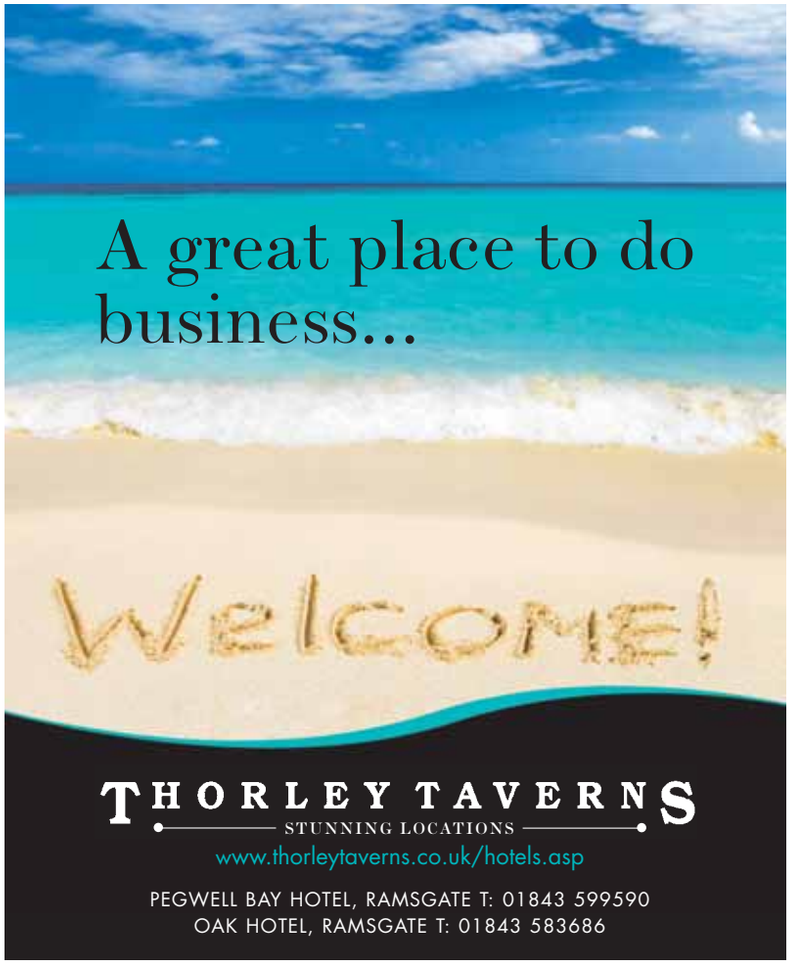
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KOS/15

In or Out: Business has its say on European Union referendum

BUSINESS says it will make its decision on whether or not the UK should stay in the European Union based on what concessions the prime minister can get after renegotiating the terms of the UK's membership.

The revelation came after the Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce polled its members as part of a national survey on businesses views about whether the UK should withdraw when a referendum is called.

Currently there is no fixed date for a referendum, but the PM, David Cameron, has pledged one will be called before the end of 2017.

The county's chamber of commerce said that in its survey, 50 per cent of those polled said that gains after a renegotiation would impact how they voted.

Jo James is the chief executive of the chamber. She told KoS that those businesses polled were still 'swing voters' and could be swayed.

She said: "The findings demonstrate that many business people have not yet taken a firm position on the question of Britain's future relationship with the EU – and a clear desire for greater clarity from Downing Street.

"If an in-out referendum were to be held tomorrow, 63 per cent of business people would vote to remain in the European Union, 27 per cent would vote to leave, and 10 per cent are unsure. Yet fully 50 per cent said their vote could change depending on David Cameron's renegotiation package.

"British businesses remain determined to see a re-calibrated relationship between the UK and the rest of the European Union, with more powers exercised from Westminster rather than Brussels."

It's a similar story with small businesses, with the Federation of Small Business (FSB) saying that it's all to play for right now. The organisation, which lobbies on behalf of small businesses across the UK, said that just under half of its members would vote to remain members of the EU, while a similar number would vote to leave.



> **"Many business people have not yet taken a firm position on the question of Britain's future relationship with the EU"**
>
> **Jo James,** chief exec of Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce

And business in Kent may hold stronger views than many across the country due to the close proximity to Europe. One small business owner is Phoebe Jones, who owns a catering company in Deal.

She told KoS: "Being a part of the European Union has definitely boosted my business. I think that as members, the freedom to easily travel to the UK brings people in from the continent who might otherwise go somewhere else. The hospitality industry is a bit different though, as it tends to benefit from tourism. Other sectors may not feel as positive about remaining part of the EU, as it has meant the introduction of more red tape and regulation in the past."

Mrs James said: "Many assume that the EU referendum is a simple in-out debate where both camps are firmly entrenched in their positions, but this survey shows that business-people want more information and greater clarity, and for now at least their vote is still up for grabs."

Shortage of commercial property good sign for future

Demand is at a high, signalling buoyant economy across county reports **Jamie Weir**

Continued from page 51

Mr Wookey said: "Commercial property is a difficult place for institutional funding. Retail units, for instance, don't give the same level of return as housing, and it also carries a higher risk to the investor."

Despite that, confidence is growing in the sector, with investors starting to come in to the market. Ashford, according to Mr Wookey is a prime example of this.

"There are a number of non-residential schemes coming forward in the town centre, and it, along with Kent is being seen more and more as a place to invest," explained Mr Wookey.

One example of this is the recent planning decision to allow the expansion of MacArthur Glen retail outlet.

However, other schemes have been knocked back, including Gallaghers Waterside Park development at junction eight of the M20. The decision to block expansion at the site saw car parts company Ferdinand Bilstein UK complain that it couldn't grow, and saying that it would move 100 jobs to the Midlands instead.

Mr Fenton says councils need to work to help boost business, not hold it back, telling KoS one way councils could do this is by giving greater flexibility.

He said: "Property values are quite low in parts of east Kent when compared with other areas in west Kent.

"The issue is that the cost of building is normally the same. That means that there needs to be a level of flexibility from councils with less restrictions and less levies placed on developers if east Kent wants the same level of development."

Planning, according to both Mr Fenton and Mr Wookey, needs to be a smoother process for developers looking to get schemes going.

Mr Fenton said: "We need to make sure developers are able to work in better partnership with local councils, but we also want to see every tier of government, from national to local, supporting business and development."

That's a sentiment which Mr Wookey agrees with, saying it is vital to keeping Kent's economy booming.

He told KoS: "The key thing is that there's growth in the economy. If we're to capitalise on that, we all have a part to play."

Crisps go east

KENT Crisps are going east, with sales set to start in Taiwan.

Manston-based AMC Foods produce the snack alongside their range of Kentish Oils. The company has announced that after a catering expo in Dubai earlier this year, it will now be exporting to the far east, with the crisps set to be sold in 'high end' supermarkets in Taiwan.

Laura Audsley, commercial director, said: "There are a wealth of opportunities for export and we have a strong brand that can be carried into the international market."

Stronger as one

TRADERS in Tunbridge Wells are banding together to boost Christmas sales.

Businesses in the town will partner to promote the town as the best retail destination with a range of festive events, late night shopping and free parking for the festive season.

Fleet gets tech

CHALKWELL coach company has pumped £50,000 into new fast pay smartcard technology.

The business introduced the GoCard system – similar to Oyster – for some services three months ago.

It has now announced it will roll the system out across its whole fleet.

Elite legal eagle

FURLEY Page is celebrating great results in The Legal 500 UK Awards which saw one of its lawyers, David Hall, named an elite practitioner.

The Kent law firm was also recommended in 11 practice areas with commercial, employment and property among its specialisms.

Fire workshop

KENT Fire and Rescue Service will be holding an event about fire safety for business.

The free workshop gives information on what companies should do to conform with law. It takes place on October 7 at Canterbury Christ Church University's Hall Place.

Cheer for beer

SHEPHERD Neame announced a record operating profit for 2014 to 2015.

The brewer saw a 5.1 per cent boost to £14.1 million over the trading year. One reason given for the growth was strong performance in its managed pub estate.

Construction Expo is 'a must' for all in building

THE south east's largest construction conference and exhibition returns on October 7 at the Kent Event Centre, Detling, Maidstone

Construction Expo is the region's biggest construction, engineering and design conference and exhibition.

The expo offers businesses high quality targeted leads with more than 2,200 visitors to the event in 2014. Of that number, more than 180 businesses exhibited and many major house builders and contractors attended.

Co-located with the Manufacturing and Electronic Expo at the Kent Event Centre near Maidstone, the Construction Expo – which is sponsored for the second year by Lee Evans Partnership – will see more than 200 exhibitors showcasing their products and services.

Workshops will focus on what social media can accomplish for the construction industry and building information modelling (BIM) as well as two sessions hosted by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (Rics).

Alongside this there will again be one of the UK's only completely free 'Meet the Buyer' events hosting 22 of the UK's leading contractors and clients.

These including some of the biggest names in the sector, with the likes of Kier, Amey, Skanksa, Wilmott Dixon and Balfour Beatty attending. Meet the buyer will offer businesses the rare opportunity to meet directly with the buying team of these large companies and build a connection.

Kicking off the event will be designer Wayne Hemingway, talking about the Dreamland project in Margate. He'll discuss people, power and creative led regeneration

Former minister of state for UK trade and investment, Lord Digby Jones, will be the event's keynote speaker this year.

He will be looking at the tangible opportunities available to the construction sector and the importance of exporting to the UK and its position in the world market place.

Lord Jones will be joined in the conference programme by Dr David Hancock, the government's head of construction. Dr Hancock will tackle subjects such as what needs to happen after the government construction strategy 2011, how to improve project capability and the future of government construction.

Neil Edwards, chief executive of the Builders' Conference will also be attending the event. He'll examine the billions of pounds of projects currently coming online.

As well as the range of specialist speakers there will be an update by chief financial officer Fenlon Dunphy on the progress of the £2.6 billion Paramount Resort Project at Swanscombe. He'll include further details on supply chain events in November.

Jo James, chief executive of the Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce, said: "With less than a couple of weeks to go we are very much looking forward to Construction Expo 2015.

"I truly believe it will be a highly productive day for all those involved and as the south east continues to be the hub of the construction industry in the UK this event is a must attend for anyone related to the sector."



KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Former minister of state for UK trade and investment, Lord Digby Jones.

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Keynote Speakers



Fenlon Dunphy
An update on the £2.6 billion Entertainment Resort
9.10am



Anthony Eastwood
Rolls Royce Motor Cars
The Skills Challenge in UK Manufacturing
10.10am



Dr David Hancock
The future of Government Construction
11.40am



Lee Penford
The Avionics Supply Chain: A demanding environment
1.30pm



Neil Edwards
Find out about the £billions of projects around the UK
2.15pm



Phil Edwards
My challenge to build the world's quickest electric bike
3pm

Business reacts to Corbyn victory

Labour leader looks good for small business but causes other concerns across county

ONE of the key reasons the Labour Party has struggled to gain national power through the years has been the perception of not being able to run the economy.

Tony Blair's new Labour shifted the party's economic management to the right, embracing a freer market with fewer state controls.

But now that hard-left member Jeremy Corbyn has swept to power leading the party, will it be embraced by the business community, or is it burning those economic bridges?

During the run-up to the Labour leadership election, the national business community were negative about the MP, stating he would be 'bad for business'.

It doesn't seem that now he's made it to power Kent's business community thinks much more of him.

The appointment of veteran left-winger John McDonnell as shadow chancellor has also done little to quell fears Mr Corbyn might attack business prospects.

Not all business is negative about the new leader though, with Tom Botting, owner of solar installer Sun Force based outside Maidstone, saying that Mr Corbyn looked promising for his industry.

He said: "Some of his policies really chime with me, as he seems to want to strike a blow to bigger business and help smaller ones like mine.

"In particular, he's pledged to help boost investment in green, sustainable industries, so obviously that would benefit my business as a solar panel installer.

"I can understand some reluctance from bigger businesses though, as he has made some fairly hardline statements in the past. Talk of renationalising anything is likely to fall pretty flat with most people."

Some of those statements made by Mr Corbyn seem to have worried members of the business community.

Tina Delvey manages a transport company in Canterbury. She told KoS that although she's voted Labour in the past, Mr Corbyn has concerned her.

She said: "His appointment of a very left wing shadow chancellor is a concern for me. Tony Blair's government seemed to be moving in a more centre-ground direction, and I think that was, on the whole, far more positive for business. It provided a sense of security, and less state interference.

"I'm concerned that Mr Corbyn will take the Labour Party away from that environment and towards a more negative one for business. He does have some good policies for smaller businesses like mine, with pledges to freeze the small business rate and also impose rent controls to help local shops.

"The problem is these look like he's trying to control business, rather than simply helping provide an environment for it to grow."

It's something which has caused national concern too, with Simon Walker from the Institute of Directors saying that the new Labour leader's policies 'would undermine our open and competitive economy'.



LEFT: The Labour leader is an unashamed socialist Pic: Garry Knight

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Recovering pre-registration VAT on purchases

For new or growing businesses, registering for VAT is a very important decision, and not to be taken lightly. However, once the decision is made, there is a unique opportunity to recover much of the VAT you have paid before registration.

Once registered, you can go back 6 months from the effective registration date and recover VAT paid on services purchased for the business. For goods, you can go back even further, up to 4 years provided they are still on hand or in stock. If you've bought computers, equipment or other assets for the business before your registration, this retrospective recovery can lead to a generous windfall.

You will need to have the relevant evidence, e.g. tax invoices addressed to the business. Recovery of VAT is also dependent on the goods and or services being purchased for your taxable business activities. It is also important to note that recovery of VAT from the pre-registration period should be made on your first VAT return.

As ever, HMRC like to make life that much harder for small businesses, and have recently 'tweaked' their policy on the recovery of VAT on goods purchased pre-registration. Although the 4 year time limit still applies, HMRC now expect you to make a reduction in the amount you recover, to take into account the use of those goods prior to registration.

As a result, new businesses should exercise care, not only when deciding whether to register for VAT, but also on what to put through that first VAT return

feedback

your say...

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Please include your name and address, although these will be withheld in exceptional circumstances, and a daytime phone number for verification (this will not be published). We reserve the right to edit all letters.

Stop bashing our health service

I AM tired of hearing doom stories about the NHS so regularly in the mainly Tory press.

Yes, the NHS is in trouble, but it is a result of a long established trashing policy to make the NHS seem to be inept, incompetent, wasteful and financially wasteful. It is inevitable that mistakes can be found in the largest business in Britain but it is still the best in the world.

The current problems are a result of a history of underfunding by government with the objective of running the NHS down to a point where Government can say that it is not fit for purpose and should be privatised. As if this will improve matters.

Yes, government announce they are still pouring money into the NHS, then much of it pours out again to the privatised sections of the health service to profit share holders and magnum-sized salaries for management.

My own personal experiences with the NHS have been nothing short of exceptional, a pacemaker in 2012 and an artificial hip in 2015. Surgical skills were perfection, post operative treatment excellent, recuperation without a hitch.

I cannot fault the NHS and cannot believe I ever will.

So let us all fight this handing over our health to big business, whose first priority is to share holders and money grubbing fat-cats, whereas the first priority of the NHS is the patients.

DJ Massey,
Coxheath

Long-running debate returns...

I WAS wondering if my recent letter would get a reaction from Ray Duff. Sure enough it did.

His reply to me missed part of the point I wished to make – my own fault: my original letter tried to cover too many points, was too long and got edited. This was my conclusion on air quality and traffic: As far as traffic is concerned (and it's not all down to traffic anyway) it's getting better; every year brings cleaner vehicles. That way lies the solution. Cars are the cleanest; commercial and public transport vehicles lag behind, and even though they are catching up, many supposedly "green" buses are not as green as they claim.

The only reason we get figures saying how dangerous the situation is every time improvements are made, along come Brussels bureaucrats to tighten the rules ever further; a constant "moving of goalposts".

There are pollution hotspots, it's true, which are also congestion hotspots. The cleanest traffic is free flowing traffic, which brings me to the final point from Alex Hill's (CPRE) missive.

Out comes the falsehood so often repeated that it's mistaken for fact; building roads increases congestion by generating traffic. Sorry Alex, that just isn't true.

If it appears that way it's because most road building and improvement are too little too late, so that they barely cope with traffic increases already happening. Traffic increases (and decreases) are directly aligned with, and the result of, the level of economic activity.

So if we are going to be better off, that will mean more traffic – so build the roads it needs and where it needs it. The option of just restricting it (and consequently all our activities) is downright "luddite".

Think about it, there would be little point in building a road that went unused, would there? So increased traffic can be regarded as a success.

On the detail of Dartford and a Lower Thames Crossing the policy of the Alliance of British Drivers is that new crossings are absolutely required – the sooner the better. We are less concerned about precise locations than getting something in place.

Your information on the ABD is out of date by the way. For the record, the old Association of British Drivers merged with the Driver's Alliance in 2012, since when it has been the Alliance of British Drivers.

Ian Taylor,
Director, Alliance of British Drivers

LETTER OF THE WEEK



We need to review approach to safety

THERE is a need for an urgent rethink on road safety in light of another set of very poor statistics, reported in KoS recently, that show an appalling 715 people were killed or seriously injured in crashes on Kent and Medway's roads last year compared with 650 in 2013.

These tragic figures show that Kent County Council's casualty reduction strategy, introduced in 2013, fundamentally isn't working. It is far too narrow, with too much reliance on seemingly never-ending road awareness campaigns. We need to get serious about speed enforcement and KCC and Kent Police need to scrap their opposition to 20mph zones in Kent.

KCC is on course to miss its 2020 casualty reduction targets by a wide margin. The line is, basically, it is the road users' fault. In fact, KCC needs to do far more to help to reduce the likelihood of incidents and this means investment, creative road designs that take into account all users, and support for reduced speed limits. I believe there is too much focus on reducing car journey times, to the detriment of proper road safety measures.

Having spent the best part of two years to finally gain a 20mph limit on a road outside Saltwood Primary School in my division, I know only too well the hurdles that need to be overcome. Tellingly, the majority of incidents are on 30mph roads. All of the evidence shows that 20 mph zones are effective.

We need investment in dedicated cycle lanes and traffic calming measures, plus investment in public transport, not more lip-service, posters and leaflets. Moreover, we shouldn't forget the hundreds of people that die in the county each year as a result of air pollution, with traffic a major contributor.

Martin Whybrow
Green Party, Hythe

...and another contribution

OBVIOUSLY my belief we should all be free and be equal, is not enough for St Duff and Christopher Hudson-Gool, they are looking for total capitulation (KoS, letters, ad nauseum).

They have their own selective brand of freedom and equality.

St Duff still demands to know if I support 'gay' marriage, more inquisition to see if I'm fit to live in St Duff's society. Meanwhile Christopher Hudson-Gool lectures me on Alan Turing!

I need no lecturing on Alan Turing, having read the book, seen the film and made the pilgrimage to Bletchley or the other amazing people we also owe our existence to. It's our government that needs the lecture, especially sacking our troops days away from qualifying for their full pensions.

I would suggest these two should stop digging, as the more they write, the more they indicate their true intent and it's nothing to do with freedom, or equality. More to do with forcing their point of view onto the rest of us, whether we like it or not

Phil Granger,
West Malling

Reverse decision on puppy farm

GREG Clark (my MP) is firmly wedged in the hotseat over his decision to support the planning application for a 'puppy farm' in Yorkshire, supplying beagles to the vivisection industry.

Many people are fighting to get his heartless decision reversed.

Forget the planning bit, this is about compassion. It there's none for animals, then expect the same for human beings.

Mary McNulty,
Brenchley

KOS 10 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

AS part of our commitment to providing the best service to you, we have produced our 10 guiding principles

Kent on Sunday will:

1) Be available in every postcode in Kent.
2) Be fair, accurate and balanced.
3) Be written in clear, concise English.
4) Not be overly sensational.
5) Have a sense of humour.
6) Have an easily understood division between news, comment and advertising.
7) Seek to celebrate as well as constructively criticise.
8) Highlight topical issues of concern to people living in the county.
9) Spotlight individual cases which raise broader concerns.
10) Champion causes that it feels are important to the well-being of the county and its people.

We hope you enjoy Kent on Sunday.

images of kent



Harbour wall, Broadstairs

by **Brian Summers, Faversham**

To see your photograph printed, email **editorial@kosmedia.co.uk**, or post it to **Archant KOS Media, Images of Kent, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford, TN23 1PP**. Be sure to include your name, address and a contact telephone number. Unfortunately we cannot return any prints, and please do not send negatives.
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Please note, our relationship with MyFerryLink has now come to an end. We thank them for their long support.

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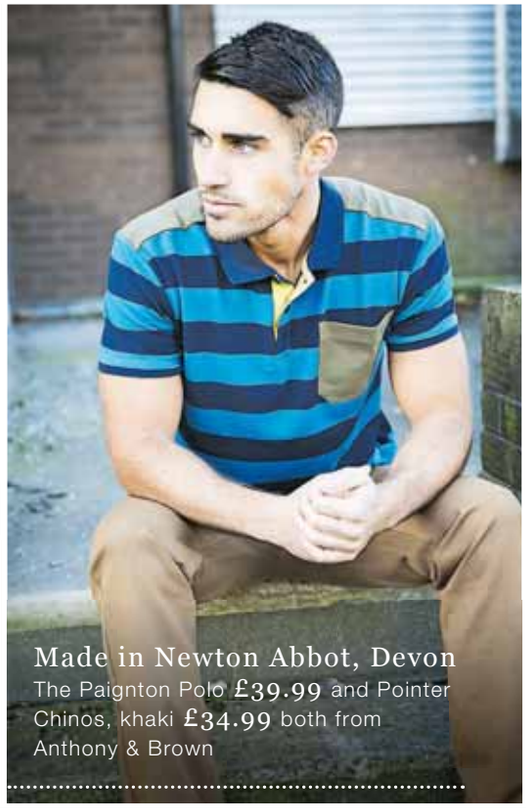












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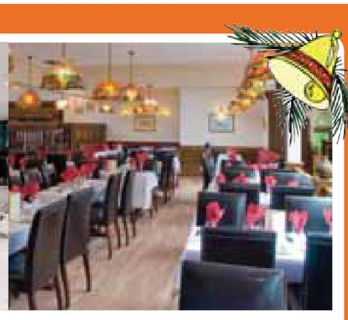


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New Year at Bosworth Hall Hotel, Leicestershire

30 December, 2015 • 3 nights half board, £**249**pp • Quote: NB12-KOS

Join us for a super New Year break at a country house hotel in the heart of England. This self-drive break is for adults only and includes meals and entertainment.

The venue is Bosworth Hall Hotel, in the village of Market Bosworth, a few miles from Leicester.

The hotel is a grade 2-listed building dating back to the 17th century set in 11 acres of landscaped gardens. The imposing sweep of the hall's main staircase has intricately carved banisters bearing baskets of fruit and flowers. The main hall is panelled in oak and boasts a stunning Tudor stone fireplace. Large windows give the rooms a light and airy aspect and overlook breath-taking views of the gardens and moat.

You'll enjoy a welcome drink on arrival with an opportunity to meet the staff.

INCLUDED 3 nights stay at Bosworth Hall Hotel sharing a twin/double bedded room with en-suite facilities • 3 breakfasts, 2 dinners and 1 Gala Hogmanay buffet • Entertainment every evening



Christmas Cracker Party through the Decades

20 November, 2015 • 3 nights half board-plus, £**129**pp • Quote: CC11-KOS

Join us for an over 40s Christmas party weekend to remember as we re-wind the decades and go back to the 60s, 70s and 80s at Pontins Pakefield, by the sea near Lowestoft, Suffolk. Enjoy live music from original 70s band Brotherhood of Man, 60s rockers The Swinging Blue Jeans and the new touring show Whitney – Queen of The Night. Add 3 Free Drinks per person per night and you've got the perfect recipe for a great party weekend.

INCLUDED: 3 Free drinks every night - house beers & spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks & mixers • 3 breakfasts & 3 dinners • Full entertainment programme • 3 nights en-suite chalet - upgrade available • Towels & linen



We Love the 60s Spring Party Weekend

11 March, 2016 • 3 nights half board-plus, £**129**pp • Quote: PS3-KOS

Join us at Pontins Pakefield, on the Suffolk coast, for a Spring Party - for over 40s only - to blow away the winter cobwebs. We've lined up a brilliant entertainment showbill featuring The Ivy League, The Merseybeats and The Pacemakers plus tributes to The Beach Boys and The Beatles. With non-stop entertainment from Friday evening to Sunday evening and free drinks every night, this is one party weekend you're sure to love.

INCLUDED: 3 Free drinks per person per night - house beers & spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks & mixers • Full 60s theme entertainment programme • 3 breakfasts & 3 dinners • 3 nights en-suite chalet accommodation - upgrade available

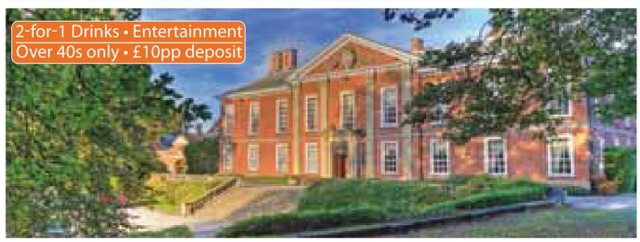


Worthing Winter Warmer Party - Chatsworth Hotel

29 Jan & 5 Feb, 2016 • 2 nights half board-plus, £**129**pp • Quote: WG1/2-KOS

Join us in Worthing for a Winter Warmer Party and enjoy £1 drinks and live entertainment every night. The Chatsworth is one of the finest hotels on the south coast, just a stone's throw from the sea and a short stroll to the town centre. All bedrooms are en-suite and a lift services all floors.

INCLUDED: £1 drinks from 7pm to 10pm both evenings - pint of house beer or small glass of wine • 2 dinners and 2 breakfasts • Live nightly entertainment • 2 nights sharing an en-suite bedroom with TV & free wifi



Carry on New Year Party at Bosworth Hall

29 January, 2016 • 2 nights half board-plus, £**119**pp • Quote: BW1-KOS

Extend your New Year celebrations at Bosworth Hall Hotel, in the village of Market Bosworth near Leicester. Our popular private party weekends have become a must-do annual event with guests returning year after year. We've arranged a super entertainment line-up for our Party Break, including tributes to Frankie Valli, The Eagles and Kenny & Dolly. You will also enjoy 2-for-1 drinks both nights.

INCLUDED: 2-for-1 drinks from 7pm to 11pm both nights • 2 nights sharing an en-suite bedroom with TV & tea/coffee tray • 2 dinners & 2 breakfasts • Full programme of live entertainment both nights • Free use of leisure facilities (indoor pool & gym)





Back to the 60s Carry on New Year Party

8 January, 2016 • 3 nights half board-plus, from £**229**pp • Quote: BP1-2-KOS

Join us for a private New Year party at Warner Bembridge Coast Hotel on the Isle of Wight as we extend the festivities into January and take you on a trip back to the 1960s. Our exclusive weekend, designed specially for the over 40s generation, includes a gala New Year's Eve party PLUS Free Drinks every night from 6pm-midnight. The entertainment line-up features authentic 60s Bands The Fourmost and Union Gap, plus a tribute to Dusty Springfield.

INCLUDED: Free drinks from 6pm to midnight every night - beers - house lager, bitter and cider; branded spirits including Smirnoff, Bacardi, Bells, Gordon's Gin, Courvoisier, Lambs Navy Rum, Martini & Harveys Bristol Cream Sherry; wine by the glass; draught soft drinks and cordials • 3 dinners and 3 breakfasts • 1960s themed live nightly entertainment • 3 nights en-suite chalet - upgrades to main hotel available • Return car ferry crossing Portsmouth-Fishbourne or Lymington-Yarmouth



Come Dancing Carry on New Year Party

8 January, 2016 • 3 nights half board-plus, from £**279**pp • Quote: BP1-3-KOS

Dance enthusiasts can enjoy dance tuition, dance cabaret, social dancing, a Gala Ball and much more at our Carry on New Year party weekend at Warner Bembridge Coast Hotel on the Isle of Wight. Six Times UK Ten Dance Champions Richard Still and Morgan Hemphill will dance 2 evening sessions for us and also provide a Latin workshop. Dance tuition - up to 8 hours - is by Philip Wylie of Ballroom & Latin Dance specialists **Holiday & Dance**. There are reserved tables and seating exclusively for a maximum of 200 dance guests who also have access to the show lounge with our super 60s entertainment line-up.

INCLUDED: Free drinks from 6pm to midnight every night • 3 dinners and 3 breakfasts • Live nightly entertainment • Social dancing • Dance demonstrations and tuition • Gala New Year's Eve Ball • 3 nights en-suite chalet - upgrades to main hotel available • Return car ferry crossing Portsmouth-Fishbourne or Lymington-Yarmouth

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By Steve Loader
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk



QASHQAI THREAT: Suzuki's more affordable SX4 S-Cross is a big rival to Nissan's crossover

NEW CITY STAR: the space efficient Celerio

COMPACT APPEAL: the Swift supermini takes 30 per cent of Suzuki sales

Suzuki soars after Swift makeover

BRAND UPDATE: Flexible Japanese marque picks the sectors it wants to contest, concentrating on well-priced smaller models and 4x4s...

SUZUKI has transformed itself over the past few years.

It was always a brand offering customer satisfaction, value and reliability, points underlined recently by consumer watchdog JD Power, which rated the brand No2 for customer satisfaction, with the Suzuki Alto also voted No1 for dependability in the city car sector.

But the difference lately has been how the Japanese marque's cars have become far more interesting and good to drive.

The Swift supermini has been the pivotal model here, after Suzuki recognised that the long-running model name was previously anything but swift in terms of technology, style or momentum.

So, it was taken in hand two generations ago and, pound for pound, is now the most entertaining three and five-door supermini you can buy (from £8,490).

It also offers racy Sport and 4x4 versions and accounts for 30 per cent of Suzuki's UK sales, and I know several motoring writers who own one.

Suzuki also launched an impressive Alto replacement last year: the Celerio (from £6,490) isn't the prettiest city car, but it is the most space efficient.

And Suzuki has now announced the launch of a slightly bigger brother to the Swift next year by returning to the Baleno nameplate it used in the UK until 2002.



COMING SOON: the Baleno nameplate returns to Britain

It wasn't the most dynamic of cars, but highly respected for reliability; expect more of that plus a dash of Swift pizzazz.

If you need something bigger, then there is the newly-launched Vitara SUV (from £13,999) available in front-wheel drive (FWD) or 4x4, or Suzuki's Nissan Qashqai rival, the SX4 S-Cross – the name might be confusing, but it's good value, also from £13,99 with FWD and 4x4 versions.

And the final member of this eclectic line-up is the legendary Jimny (from £12,499) – still the cheapest new car for 'yomping' across rough terrain.

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Official Fuel Consumption Figures for the Suzuki Celerio range mpg (litres/100km) and CO_2 emissions (g/km): Urban 55.3-68.9 (5.3-4.1), Extra Urban 76.3-83.0 (3.7-3.4), Combined 65.7-78.4 (4.3-3.6), CO_2 emissions 99-84 g/km.

The above fuel consumption figures are based on an EU test for comparative purposes only and may not reflect real driving results. For full details contact your local participating Suzuki Dealer. All prices and specifications correct at time of going to print. *Celerio range – Celerio 1.0 SZ2 Petrol Manual available at £6,999 to Celerio 1.0 SZ4 Petrol AGS available at £9,799. For full details contact your local participating Suzuki Dealer. Offer subject to availability for vehicles privately registered between 1st July 2015 to 30th September 2015 from participating Authorised Suzuki Dealers only. Offer cannot be used in conjunction with any other offers. Model shown: Celerio SZ2 (metallic paint available at £415).

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Fuel consumption figures for Fiat 500X Range in mpg (l/100km): Urban 32.5 (8.7) – 60.1 (4.7); Extra Urban 49.6 (5.7) – 74.3 (3.8); Combined 42.2 (6.7) – 68.9 (4.1). CO_2 emissions 157 – 109 g/km. Fuel consumption and CO_2 figures based on standard EU tests for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. Promotion available on Fiat 500X Pop 1.6 E-Torq 110hp registered by 30th September 2015. Fiat Deposit Contribution only available in conjunction with Fiat i-Deal PCP. With Fiat i-Deal you have the option to return the vehicle and not pay the final payment, subject to the vehicle not having exceeded an agreed annual mileage (a charge of 6p per mile for exceeding 10,000 miles per annum in this example) and being in good condition. Finance subject to status. Guarantees may be required. Terms and Conditions apply. At participating Dealers only. Fiat Financial Services, PO BOX 4465, Slough, SL1 0RW. We work with a number of creditors including Fiat Financial Services.

X factor for FIAT's 500 branding

Italian brand has tried adding to 500 number's success by applying it to a classy two and four-wheel drive model, writes **Steve Loader...**

FIAT 500X 1.6 Multi-Jet 120hp Cross

Price:	from £26,095
Driving appeal:	★★★★★
Image:	★★★★★
Space:	★★★★★
Value:	★★★★
Running costs:	★★★★
How green?:	★★★★★
Best rival:	Jeep Renegade

IS FIAT about to spin-off '500' as a standalone brand, as Citroën did with the DS line-up?

It looked that way earlier this year, when the resurgent Italian brand launched yet another 500 series product.

The 500X crossover (from £14,595) is the third model to wear that number and, despite FIAT marketing speak, is quite different from the 500 retro city car/super-mini that revitalized the brand's image and fortunes after 2007.

But you can't blame FIAT for hoping some 500 stardust will shine 'X' sales, as it has for its space-efficient people carriers, the 500L and seven-seat 500L MPW.

And there are more 500 genetics in the rounded 'X' design than the necessarily boxy 'L' models, which could have been sired by the milkman. '500' badges abound anyway – even in the headlamp housings.

FIAT says the 500X plays to three strengths: 500 heritage, design, and substance – and it does indeed have a chunky quality to match the looks – summed up by the line "500X – the Stylish Adventurer".

It walks the talk here too, because, like some other FIATs, it sells in front-wheel drive, Trekking format – the driving wheels have a sophisticated traction control for creditable off-roading – or full 4x4.







I tried the 4x4 on a rough course at the launch, but it didn't really challenge the 500X's impressive powers, aided by decent ground clearance and selectable off-road mode.

FIAT says the 500X appeals particularly to younger men and less than 30 per cent will be fleet/company car sales, which recommends the 140bhp turbocharged 1.4 petrol unit: it costs far less, offers 41.7mpg (official combined) and is lively and responsive on-road.

The diesels (1.6 and 2.0-litre) start from £19,095, calling for galactic mileages to recoup the extra outlay through better economy, even if diesel fuel prices have dipped below petrol.

But the 120bhp 1.6-litre diesel in the test car is impressive, blending lively acceleration with refinement for urban and rural motoring, while delivering an official combined 68.8mpg.

Despite FIAT targeting younger males, there's no doubt that the 500X is a crowd pleaser: steering and handling is responsive and, while it is a tall crossover/SUV, the body is well-controlled in cornering and you quickly forget this is a relatively big car compared with its smaller hatchback sister.

And talking of size: as with the 500X's other less svelte siblings – those 500L MPVs – cabin space efficiency is impressive, with good head and legroom for all, decent boot and lots of clever stowage space.

The 500X's biggest rival is actually a fellow FIAT group model and close relation, the Jeep Renegade, since the MINI Countryman is relatively pricey while the Nissan Juke is plain ugly – anyone who likes that, won't choose the 500X anyway.



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Fuel consumption figures for Fiat 500X Range in mpg (l/100km): Urban 32.5 (8.7) – 60.1 (4.7); Extra Urban 49.6 (5.7) – 74.3 (3.8); Combined 42.2 (6.7) – 68.9 (4.1). CO_2 emissions 157 – 109 g/km. Fuel consumption and CO_2 figures based on standard EU tests for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. Promotion available on Fiat 500X Pop 1.6 E-Torq 110hp registered by 30th September 2015. Fiat Deposit Contribution only available in conjunction with Fiat i-Deal PCP. With Fiat i-Deal you have the option to return the vehicle and not pay the final payment, subject to the vehicle not having exceeded an agreed annual mileage (a charge of 6p per mile for exceeding 10,000 miles per annum in this example) and being in good condition. Finance subject to status. Guarantees may be required. Terms and Conditions apply. At participating Dealers only. Fiat Financial Services, PO BOX 4465, Slough, SL1 0RW. We work with a number of creditors including Fiat Financial Services.

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BRADSTOW SCHOOL

Bradstow is a creative and unique residential school for children between the ages of 5 & 19. It is situated in 13 acres of parkland just a few hundred metres from the sandy beaches of Broadstairs. We seek to meet the needs of children and young people with autism and severe learning difficulties with associated behaviours that may be challenging. We have achieved national recognition for our developments in Communication and Behaviour Management.

HOUSEPARENT – EXTENDED PROVISION

Working as part of the childcare team, this role involves providing care and support to students mornings, evenings and weekends being a student's Keyworker and some management responsibility.
£22,442 - £25,416 pa - 41 hours per week. All year round

LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANTS (TEAM SUPPORT WORKERS – EDUCATION)

The successful applicants will be responsible for assisting teachers in the school, for which previous experience is required:
£13,047 - £13,838 pa - 37½ hours per week, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Mon-Fri - Term time only, plus 2 weeks*

(INDIVIDUAL LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANTS)

The successful applicants will be responsible for assisting teachers in the school, no previous experience is required, full training will be provided:
£12,075 - £12,420 pa - 37½ hours per week, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Mon-Fri - Term time only, plus 2 weeks*
***For these roles there will also be up to a maximum of two weeks for the school's respite care provision if required, for which extra payment would be paid.**

ICT SUPPORT TECHNICIAN

Working under the supervision of the Data Manager, this role provides a wide range of ICT support throughout the school.
£17,714 - £19,742 pa - 37 hours per week. All year round

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT (PERSONNEL)

Assisting the Personnel Officer, and Personnel Assistant, this role provides Personnel based administrative support to the school.
£16,231 - £17,372 pa - 37 hours per week. All year round

For all posts we look for candidates who are mature, warm, creative and open to learning with a patient and caring attitude to deal sensitively with vulnerable children.

We are committed to sustainability and preserving the environment and therefore encourage applications by email, so for an application form and information pack please email personnel@bradstow.wandsworth.sch.uk. Or you may call 01843 608727 (24 hour recruitment answer machine).

Please note that CV's will not be considered.

The closing date for all applications is midnight Thursday 1st October 2015.

Positive Steps Sevenoaks are recruiting for the following roles

Part Time Nursery Practitioner

Range of hours and days available including Term Time patterns – up to £8.50 DOE

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We are looking for Practitioners to help cover sickness and holiday leave, this is perfect for parents or people looking for a changing shift pattern. Up to £8.50 DOE

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Al-Humaidi seeks improved crowds

Ebbsfleet owner hopes stadium plans will boost attendance

Football

By Tom Pyman

tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

EBBSFLEET United's Kuwaiti owner has confirmed stadium extension plans are progressing well.

Speaking after the Fleet's 2-1 win over Weston-Super-Mare on Tuesday night, which drew a season's best attendance of 2,045, Dr Abdulla Al-Humaidi told KoS he hoped it was the start of things to come.

He said: "The stadium plans are progressing well and we're very excited about it. At the end of this season we will begin the building process, and we expect it will take eight months to complete developing what is now the Liam Daish stand.

"We've had a great turnout tonight and we hope the plans will help that number increase in the future. Hopefully it will make us prouder of Ebbsfleet United and allow us to go to another level."

After making a rampant start to their National League South campaign, which has seen them soar to a comfortable lead at the top of the table, reaching that other level seems like a real possibility.

"Getting into the Football League has been the ambition from day one," Dr Al-Humaidi said.

"That hasn't changed, and hopefully it will happen soon. But even if it doesn't happen in the next three, four, five years we'll still be on board and we will do whatever we can to make this club as successful as possible."

The businessman, who is involved with multiple other projects, including the proposed London Paramount Resort, has been a regular visitor to Stonebridge Road this season and says he is pleased with what he has seen so far.

"I try to get to as many games as I can," he said.

"I saw a couple of friendlies in pre-season and this is my fourth or fifth league game.

"We've had a good start but I'm not too bothered at the moment.

"I like to take each game at a time and as long as there is passion and desire to get on that field and play proper football that is all that matters.

"I accept that we won't win every match, or play good football every match, but we take each one as it comes and come the end of the season we'll hope to be there or thereabouts."



PROUD: Al-Humaidi and Peter Varney (left) believe the stadium plans will help take Ebbsfleet to another level Pictures: ED MILLER

Fighter Lawrence vows to deliver 'great show'

Boxing

MAIDSTONE boxer Oliver Lawrence has promised to deliver the performance of his life next month, as he prepares for his long awaited return to the UK's premier boxing league.

The middleweight contender will collide with Birmingham's Marc Dwyer on the under card of the Queensbury Boxing League's big night of action at the Copthorne Millennium Hotel in West Sussex.

Lawrence, 23, believes he will be fitter, stronger and more powerful for his latest ring exploits after putting in hours of intensive training in the gym.

He said: "Performance wise on October 24 you are going to see the most focused and determined Oliver Lawrence that has ever set foot inside a boxing ring, and I'm aiming to put on a great show.



KNOCKOUT: Oliver Lawrence faces Marc Dwyer on October 24

"Last time out in the league back in 2014 I suffered a broken jaw which has taken a long rehabilitation process to get back to where I am today, but as we head towards the 24th I feel in fantastic shape.

"Boxing is not a game and over the last year I've upped every aspect of my training from the people I'm sparring with to the nutrition and the strength and conditioning side of things, and I've got the best team and people surrounding me so I'm in a good place."

Lawrence's showdown with Birmingham's Dwyer will feature as one of the chief supporting contests to the Welterweight title fight between Surrey rivals Danny Stalford and Anthony Ayinde.

For ticket information contact Oliver Lawrence on 07710 682931.

Sport Shorts

» Email **sports@kosmedia.co.uk** or call **Tom Pyman** on **01233653477**

Coles on fire as bowler scoops top player gong

MATT Coles capped an excellent first season back at Kent by picking up player of the year at the Spitfire Kent Cricket Awards.

The 25-year-old Maidstone-born bowler topped the supporters' vote after earlier collecting the bowling prize for 100 wickets in all formats.

The Kent Cricket Academy graduate took 67 wickets in the LV= County Championship in 14 matches at an average of 23.49 and a strike rate of 38.7.

He took a further 17 wickets in the NatWest T20 Blast as well as 16 scalps and a memorable century in the Royal London One-Day Cup.

Coles said: ''I hope my performances have re-paid the faith the coaches and management have shown in bringing me back.''

Captain Sam Northeast scored 2,007 runs to claim batsman of the year and Alex Blake, who recently signed a contract extension at the club, won the fielder of the year award.



COLES: The bowler took 67 County Championship wickets

Benefit year award for Kent stalwart Stevens

KENT all-rounder Darren Stevens has been awarded a benefit year for 2016 after more than a decade of service to the county.

The 39-year-old will celebrate his 12th season at Kent next year and says the Garden of England has become a second home since leaving his home county Leicestershire in 2004.

He said: "It's a great privilege to be awarded a benefit year. I have settled in Kent and am proud to call it my home. My baby son is Kentish and I feel like part of the furniture here.

"I've always committed 100 per cent to my cricket and I'm looking forward to making 2016 a memorable year on and off the pitch."

Arriving as a batsman and occasional bowler, Stevens has become a genuine all-rounder at Kent and claimed his 300th first-class career wicket this season.

He won player of the year in 2005 and 2010 as well as the Walter Lawrence Trophy for the fastest county century in 2013 for a 44-ball ton against Sussex in the YB40 and became the first batsman to score 3,000 runs in English T20 cricket.

He has scored more than 13,000 first-class runs with his career-best score of 208 achieved for Kent against Middlesex at Uxbridge in 2005.



STEVENS: The all-rounder has been rewarded for his service

Gills defender Davies loaned out

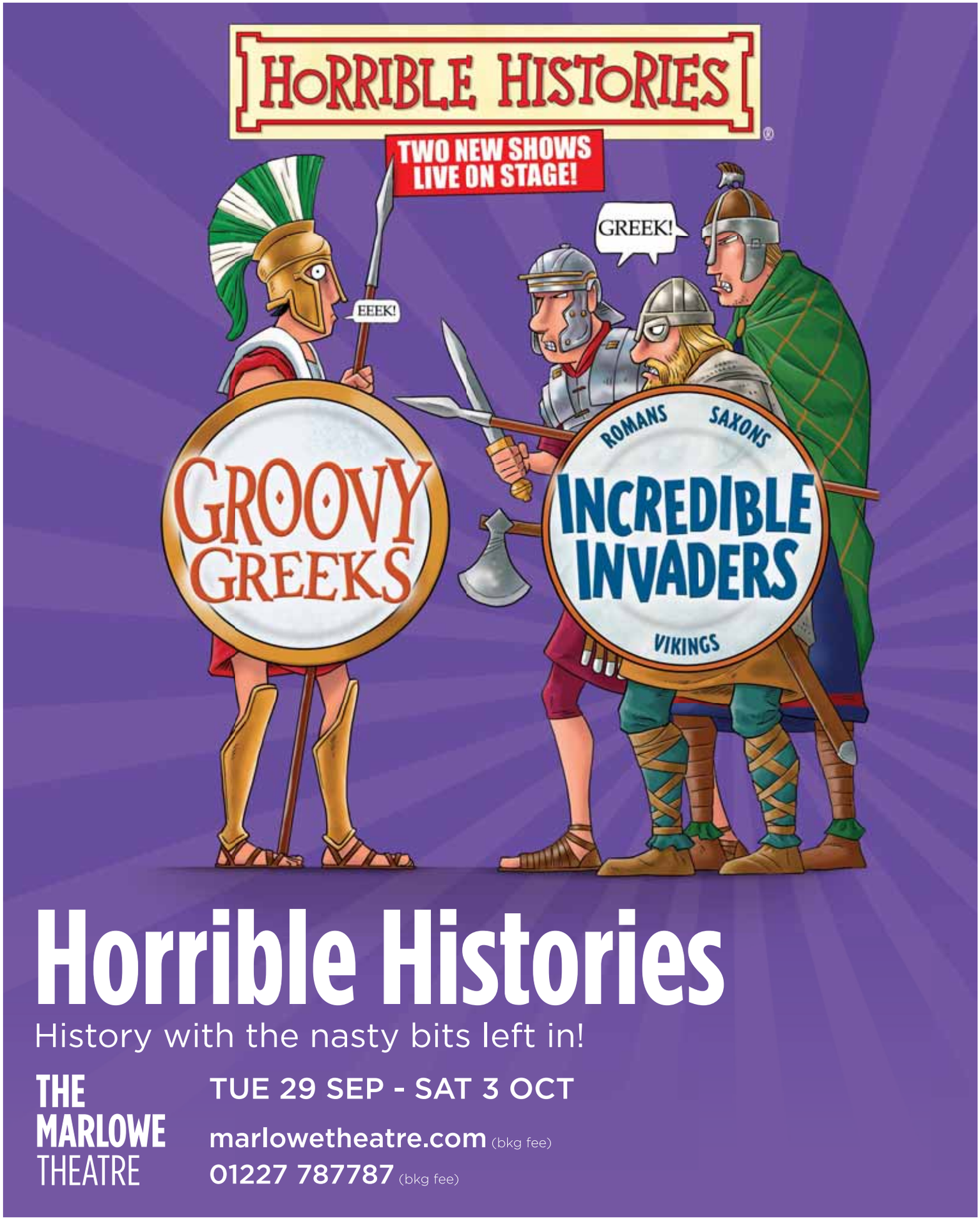
GILLINGHAM defender Callum Davies has joined National League side Eastleigh on a one month loan deal.

The 22-year-old centre-back had a brief loan spell with Bromley earlier in the campaign, having also enjoyed stints with Dover Athletic in the past.

The defender has featured in the club's development league matches this season but will now look to get some regular games and force his way back into the reckoning at Priestfield.

He has played 39 times for Gillingham in total, and made his debut for Eastleigh in a 5-2 defeat to former club Dover on Tuesday evening.

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Horrible Histories

History with the nasty bits left in!

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